WONDERFUL ADVENTURES

WILLIAM HOWARD
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WONDERFUL ADVENTURES.

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WONDERFUL ADVENTURES.

A SERIES OF NARRATIVES

OF

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

AMONG THE

NATIVE TRIBES OF AMERICA.

With Forty-five Illustrations.

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WONDERFUL ADVENTURES.

PASSAGE OF THE GREAT CAÑON OF THE COLORADO.

By MAJOR A. R. CALHOUN.

THE Rio Colorado of the West rises in Idaho territory, near the centre of the North American continent, and flows, with an irregular course, towards the south, finally discharging itself in the Gulf of California. It drains the great elevated plateau basin lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada, south of latitude 40°. The mountain ranges east and west of the plains intercept all the moisture drifted towards them from the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, so that the peak-covered plateau is comparatively arid, save where the snow-fed streams cleave their way through it. As they cross this elevated region, the beds of the various rivers gradually deepen, and the water flows through cañons,* or narrow ravines, till they join that stupendous chasm, the Valley of the Colorado, where the river, for 600 miles, flows in a bed depressed on an

* This word is derived from the Spanish, and signifies a deep gorge with perpendicular walls.

average 3,000 feet below the general surface of the country. The plains stretching on either hand from the surface of the chasms show decided indications of erosion, leading to the belief that the waters of the Colorado and its tributaries once flowed, as most other rivers do, over the surface of the country, fertilising the now dry expanse, and that they have gradually worn their way down to the depth at which they now run. The Great Cañon of this river is a narrow winding part of the chasm, where the waters seem to disappear in the bowels of the earth, for a distance of more than 300 miles.

After leaving the Great Cañon, the Colorado flows south for nearly 600 miles, to the gulf, receiving during that distance but two small tributaries, the "Bill Williams" and the Gila. Occasionally the gravelly *mesas*, or perpendicular water-worn walls of rock, devoid of vegetation, infringe on the river, leaving no bottom land; but for the greater part of the distance above stated the alluvial bottom spreads out into valleys, varying from four to twenty miles in width, bordered by these precipices. The bed of the river, where not confined by rocky banks, is continually shifting, thus rendering navigation difficult, and frequently washing over, or through, the best portions of the valleys. The water, as the name "colorado" indicates, is red, owing to the large quantities of protoxide of iron which it holds in solution. The immense amount of débris carried down annually to the Gulf of California, and deposited in the delta of the river, is having a perceptible effect in silting up the head of the gulf; indeed, there can be no doubt that at no very distant day the gulf extended to Fort Yuma, now thirty miles inland. North of Fort Yuma the valley on the other side of the river is bounded by serrated hills

and mountains, of the most fantastic shapes, devoid of vegetation, save an occasional cactus. The whole landscape has a wild, weird appearance, heightened by the clear, dry atmosphere, through which objects that would not be perceptible at such a distance in moister climates, here stand out with a wonderful distinctness.

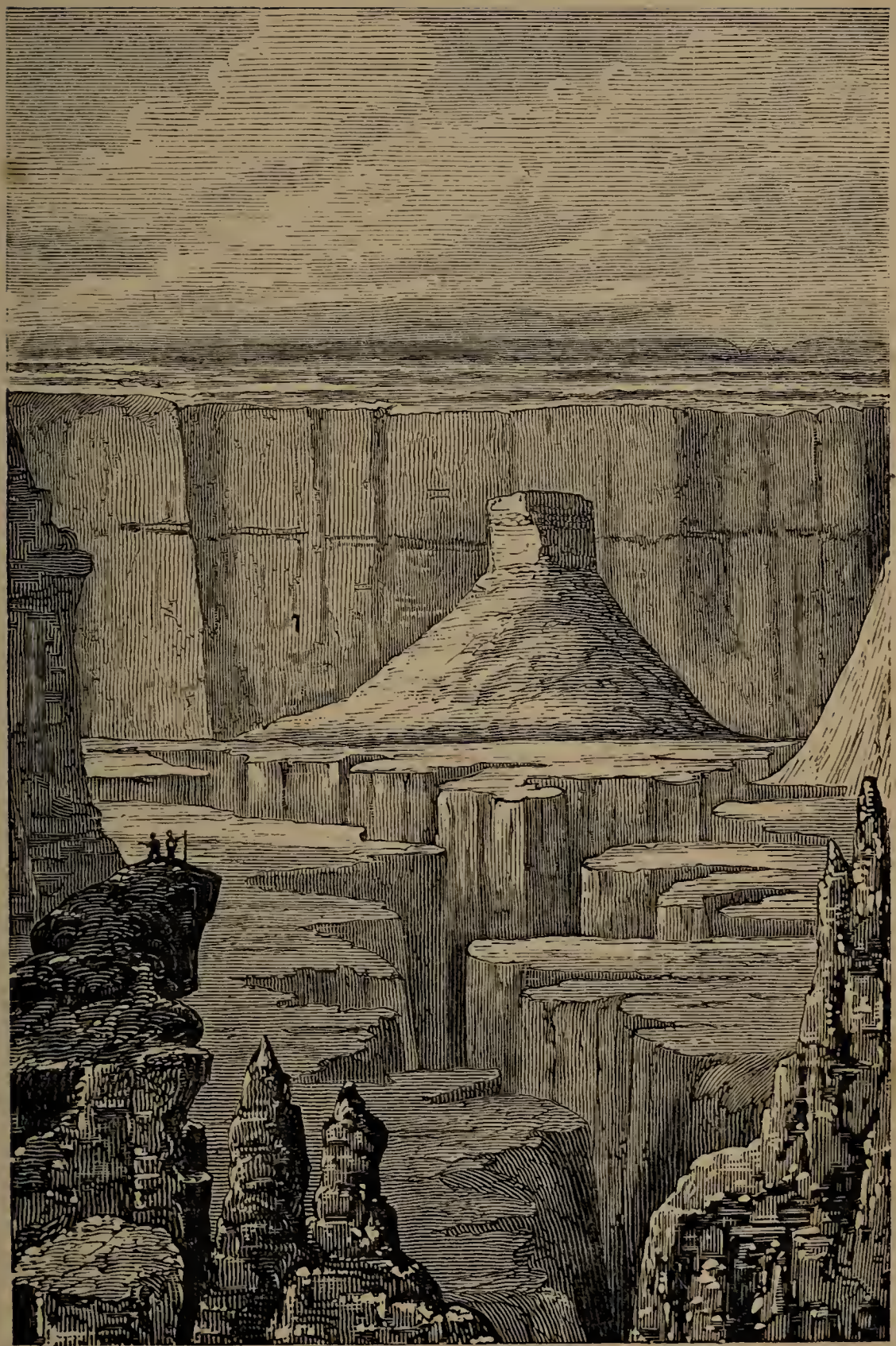
Twenty years ago the trapper and the hunter were the romantic characters of the Far West. They still figure in fiction, and there is a fascination about their daring deeds which is scarcely undeserved. They have trapped on every western stream and hunted on every mountain-side, despite the opposition of the Indian and the barrier of winter snows. They have formed the skirmish line of the great army of occupation which is daily pushing westward, and they have taught the savage to respect the white man's courage and to fear the white man's power.

While the field for the trapper and hunter has been gradually growing less, another class of adventurers has come into existence—the "prospecters" in search of precious metals. Within the last quarter of a century these men have traversed every mountain slope, from the rugged peaks of British Columbia to the rich plateaux of Old Mexico, and have searched the sands of every stream from the Mississippi to the shores of the Pacific, stimulated by the same hope of reward that led the early Spaniards to explore inhospitable wilds in their search for an "El Dorado." Could the varied and adventurous experience of these searchers for gold be written, we should have a record of daring and peril that no fiction could approach, and the very sight of gold would suggest to our minds some story of hairbreadth escape.

It has fallen to the lot of one of these "prospecters" to be the hero of an adventure more thrilling than any here-

tofore recorded, while at the same time he has solved a geographical problem which has long attracted the attention of the learned at home and abroad, who could but theorise, before his journey, as to the length and nature of the stupendous chasms, or cañons, through which the Colorado cleaves its central course. While on the survey before referred to, and while stopping for a few days at Fort Mojave, Dr. W. A. Bell, Dr. C. C. Parry, and myself, met this man, whose name is James White, and from his lips, the only living man who had actually traversed its formidable depths, we learned the story of the Great Cañon.

James White now lives at Callville, Arizona territory, the present head of navigation on the Colorado River. He is thirty-two years of age, and in person is a good type of the Saxon, being of medium height and heavy build, with light hair and blue eyes. He is a man of average intelligence, simple and unassuming in his manner and address, and without any of the swagger or bravado peculiar to the majority of frontier men. Like thousands of our young men, well enough off at home, he grew weary of the slow but certain method of earning his bread by regular employment at a stated salary. He had heard of men leaping into wealth at a single bound in the Western gold-fields, and for years he yearned to go to the land where Fortune was so lavish of her favours. Accordingly, he readily consented to be one of a party from his neighbourhood who, in the spring of 1867, started for the plains and the gold-fields beyond. When they left Fort Dodger, on the Arkansas River, April 13th, 1867, the party consisted of four men, of whom Captain Baker, an old miner and ex-officer of the Confederate army, was the acknowledged leader. The destination of this little party was the San Juan Valley, west of the Rocky Moun-



APPROACH TO THE GREAT CAÑON.

tains, about the gold-fields of which prospecters spoke in the most extravagant terms, stating that they were deterred from working the rich *placers* of the San Juan only by fear of the Indians. Baker and his companions reached Colorado "city," at the foot of Pike's Peak, in safety. This place was, and is still, the depôt for supplying the miners who work the diggings scattered through the South Park, and is the more important from being situated at the entrance to the Ute Pass, through which there is a wagon-road crossing the Rocky Mountains, and descending to the plateau beyond. The people of Colorado "city" tried to dissuade Baker from what they considered a rash project, but he was determined to carry out his original plan. These representations, however, affected one of the party so much that he left, but the others, Captain Baker, James White, and Henry Strole, completed their outfit for the prospecting tour.

The journey was undertaken on foot, with two pack-mules to carry the provisions, mining tools, and the blankets they considered necessary for the expedition. On the 25th of May they left the Colorado city, and crossing the Rocky Mountains, through the Ute Pass, entered South Park, being still on the Atlantic slope of the continent. After travelling ninety miles across the Park they reached the Upper Arkansas, near the Twin Lakes. They then crossed the Snowy Range, or Sierra Madre, and descended towards the west. Turning southerly, they passed around the head waters of the Rio Grande del Norte, and after a journey of 400 miles from Colorado "city," they reached the "Animas" branch of the San Juan River, which flows into the Great Colorado from the east.

They were now in the land where their hopes centred,

and to reach which they had crossed plains and mountains, and forded rapid streams, leaving the nearest abodes of the white man hundreds of miles to the east. Their work of prospecting for gold began in the Animas, and though they were partially successful, the result did not by any means answer their expectations. They therefore moved still further to the west, crossing the Dolores branch of Grand River to the Mancos branch of the San Juan. Following the Mancos to its mouth, they crossed to the left bank of the San Juan, and began their search in the sands. There was gold there, but not in the quantity they expected; so they gradually moved west, along the beautiful valley for 200 miles, when they found the San Juan disappeared between the lofty walls of a deep and gloomy cañon. To avoid this, they again forded the river to the right bank, and struck across a rough, timbered country, directing their course towards the great Colorado. Having travelled through this rough country for a distance estimated at fifty miles, they reached Grand River, being still above the junction of Green River, the united waters of which two streams form the Colorado proper. At the point where they struck the river, the banks were masses of perpendicular rock, down which they could gaze at the coveted water, dashing and foaming like an agitated white band, 200 feet below. Men and animals were now suffering for water; so they pushed up the stream, along the uneven edge of the chasm, hoping to find a place where they could descend to the river. After a day spent in clambering over and around the huge rocks that impeded their advance, they came upon a side cañon, where a tributary joined the main stream, to which they succeeded in descending with their animals, and thus obtained the water of which all stood so much in need.

The night of the 23rd of August they encamped at the bottom of the cañon, where they found plenty of fuel, and grass in abundance for their animals. So they sat around the camp-fire, lamenting their failure in the San Juan country, and Strole began to regret that they had undertaken the expedition. But Baker, who was a brave, sanguine fellow, spoke of *placers* up the river about which he had heard, and promised his companions that all their hopes should be realised, and that they would return to their homes to enjoy the gains and laugh at the trials of their trip. So glowingly did he picture the future, that his companions even speculated as to how they should spend their princely fortunes when they returned to the "States." Baker sang songs of home and hope, and the others lent their voices to the chorus, till far in the night, when, unguarded, they sank to sleep, to dream of coming opulence and to rise refreshed for the morrow's journey.

Early next morning they breakfasted, and began the ascent of the side cañon, up the bank opposite to that by which they had entered it. Baker was in advance, with his rifle slung at his back, gaily springing up the rocks, towards the table-land above. Behind him came White, and Strole with the mules brought up the rear. Nothing disturbed the stillness of the beautiful summer morning, but the tramping of the mules, and the short, heavy breathing of the climbers. They had ascended about half the distance to the top, when stopping for a moment to rest, suddenly the war-whoop of a band of savages rang out, sounding as if every rock had a demon's voice. Simultaneously with the first whoop a shower of arrows and bullets was poured into the little party. With the first fire Baker fell against a rock, but, rallying for a moment, he unslung his rifle and fired at

the Indians, who now began to show themselves in large numbers, and then, with the blood flowing from his mouth, he fell to the ground. White, firing at the Indians as he advanced, and followed by Strole, hurried to the aid of his wounded leader. Baker, with an effort, turned to his comrades, and in a voice still strong, said, "Back, boys, back! save yourselves, I am dying." To the credit of White and Strole be it said, they faced the savages and fought, till the last tremor of the powerful frame told that the gallant Baker was dead. Then slowly they began to retreat, followed by the exultant Indians, who stopping to strip and mutilate the dead body in their path, gave the white men a chance to secure their animals, and retrace their steps into the side cañon, beyond the immediate reach of the Indians' arrows. Here they held a hurried consultation as to the best course they could pursue. To the east for 300 miles stretched an uninhabited country, over which, if they attempted escape in that direction, the Indians, like bloodhounds, would follow their track. North, south, and west was the Colorado, with its tributaries, all flowing at the bottom of deep chasms, across which it would be impossible for men or animals to travel. Their deliberations were necessarily short, and resulted in their deciding to abandon their animals, first securing their arms and a small stock of provisions, and the ropes of the mules. Through the side cañon they travelled, due west, for four hours, and emerged at last on a low strip of bottom land on Grand River, above which, for 2,000 feet on either bank, the cold, grey walls rose to block their path, leaving to them but one avenue for escape—the foaming current of the river, flowing along the dark channel through unknown dangers.

"THE EXULTANT INDIANS MUTILATE THE DEAD BODY."

They found considerable quantities of drift-wood along the banks, from which they collected enough to enable them to construct a raft capable of floating themselves, with their arms and provisions. The raft, when finished, consisted of three sticks of cotton-wood, about ten feet in length and eight inches in diameter, lashed firmly together with the mule ropes. Procuring two stout poles with which to guide the raft, and fastening the bag of provisions to the logs, they waited for midnight and the waning moon, so as to drift off unnoticed by the Indians. They did not consider that even the sun looked down into that chasm for but one short hour in the twenty-four, leaving it for the rest of the day to the angry waters and blackening shadows, and that the faint moonlight reaching the bottom of the cañon would hardly serve to reveal the horror of their situation. Midnight came, according to their calculation of the dark, dreary hours; and then, seizing the poles, they untied the rope that held the raft, which, tossed about by the current, rushed through the yawning cañon, on the adventurous voyage to an unknown landing. Through the long night they clung to the raft, as it dashed against half-concealed rocks, or whirled about like a plaything in some eddy, whose white foam was perceptible even in the intense darkness.

They prayed for the daylight, which came at last, and with it a smoother current and less rugged banks, though the cañon walls appeared to have increased in height. Early in the morning (August 25th) they found a spot where they could make a landing, and went ashore. After eating a little of their water-soaked provisions, they returned, and strengthened their raft by the addition of some light pieces of cedar, which had been lodged in clefts of the rock by recent floods. White estimates the width of the river where they

landed at 200 yards, and the current at three miles per hour. After a short stay at this place they again embarked, and during the rest of the day they had no small difficulty in avoiding the rocks and whirlpools that met them at every bend of the river.

In the afternoon, and after having floated over a distance estimated at thirty miles from the point of starting, they reached the mouth of Green River, or rather where the Green and the Grand unite to form the Colorado proper. Here the cañons of both streams combined into one of but little greater width, but far surpassing either in the height and grandeur of its walls. At the junction the walls were estimated at 4,000 feet in height, but detached pinnacles rose 1,000 feet higher, from amidst huge masses of rock confusedly piled, like grand monuments to commemorate this meeting of the waters. The fugitives felt the sublimity of the scene, and in contemplating its stupendous and unearthly grandeur, they forgot for the time their own sorrows.

The night of the day upon which they entered the Great Cañon, and indeed on nearly all the subsequent nights of the voyage, the raft was fastened to a loose rock, or hauled up on some narrow strip of beach, where they rested till the daylight of next morning.

As they floated down the cañon, the grey sandstone walls increased in height, the lower section being smooth from the action of floods, and the rugged perpendicular walls rising towards the far-off sky, which seemed to rest on the rugged glistening summits. Here and there a stunted cedar clung to the cliff-side, 2,000 feet overhead, far beyond which the narrow blue streak of sky was perceptible. No living thing was in sight, for even the wing of bird which could pass the chasms above never fanned the dark air in those

subterranean depths—nought to gaze on but their own pale faces, and the cold grey walls that hemmed them in and mocked at their escape. Here and there the raft shot past side cañons, black and forbidding, like cells set in the walls of a mighty prison. Baker had informed his comrades as to the geography of the country, and while floating down they remembered that Callville was at the mouth of the cañon, which could not be far off—"such wonderful walls could not continue much further." Then Hope came, with the prospect of deliverance from their frightful position. A few days would take them to Callville; their provisions could be made to last five days. So these two men, thus shut in from the world, buried as it were in the very bowels of the earth, in the midst of great unknown deserts, began to console themselves, and even to jest at their situation.

Forty miles below their entrance into the great cañon, they reached the mouth of the San Juan River. They attempted to enter it, but its swift current cast them back. The perpendicular walls, high as those of the Colorado, with the water flowing from bank to bank, forbade their abandoning their raft to attempt escape in that direction. So they floated away. At every bend of the river it seemed as if they were descending deeper into the earth; the walls came closer together above them, thickening the black shadows and redoubling the echoes that went up from the foaming waters.

Four days had elapsed since they embarked on the frail raft; it was now August 28th. So far they had been constantly wet, but the water was comparatively warm, and the current more regular than they could have expected. Strole had taken upon himself to steer the raft, and, against the advice of White, he often set one end of the pole against the

bank, or some opposing rock, and then leaned with the other end against his shoulder, to push the raft away. As yet they had seen no natural bridge spanning the chasm above them, nor had fall or cataract prevented their safe advance. But about three o'clock on the afternoon of the 28th they heard the deep roar as of a waterfall in front. They felt the raft agitated, then whirled along with frightful rapidity towards a wall that seemed to bar all further progress. As they approached the cliff, the river made a sharp bend, around which the raft swept, disclosing to them, in a long vista, the water lashed into foam, as it poured through a narrow precipitous gorge, caused by huge masses of rock detached from the main wall. There was no time to think. The logs strained as if they would break their fastenings. The waves dashed around the men, and the raft was buried in the seething waters. White clung to the logs with the grip of death. His comrade stood up for an instant with the pole in his hands, as if to guide the raft from the rocks against which it was plunging; but he had scarcely straightened himself, before the raft seemed to leap down a chasm, and amid the horrible sounds White heard a shriek that thrilled him. Turning his head, he saw through the mist and spray the form of his comrade tossed for an instant on the water, then sinking out of sight in the whirlpool.

White still clung to the logs, and it was only when the raft seemed to be floating smoothly, and the sound of the rapids was behind, that he dared to look up; then it was to find himself alone, the provisions lost, and the shadows of the black cañon warning him of the approaching night. A feeling of despair seized him, and clasping his hands he prayed for the death he was fleeing from. He was made

"WHITE CLUNG TO THE LOGS WITH THE GRIP OF DEATH"

cognisant of more immediate danger by the shaking of his raft—the logs were separating; then he worked, and succeeded in effecting a landing near some flat rocks, where he made his raft fast for the night. After this he sat down, to spend the long gloomy hours in contemplating the horror of his situation, and the small chance of completing the adventurous voyage he had undertaken. He blamed himself for not having fought the Indians till he had fallen by the side of Baker. He might have escaped through the San Juan Valley, and the mountains beyond, to the settlements. Had he done so, he would have returned to his home, and rested satisfied with his experience as a prospecter. But when he thought of "home," it called up the strongest inducements for life, and he resolved "to die hard, and like a man."

Gradually the dawn, long perceptible in the upper world, began to creep down into the depths of the chasm, and gave him light to strengthen his raft and launch it again on the treacherous river. As he floated down he remembered the sad fate of Strole, and took the precaution to lash himself firmly to the raft, so as to preclude the possibility of his being separated from it. This forethought subsequently saved his life. His course through the cañon was now down a succession of rapids blocked up by masses of rock, over which his frail raft thumped and whirled, at times wholly submerged by the foaming water. At one of these rapids, in the distance of about a hundred yards he thinks, the river must have fallen between thirty and forty feet. In going over this place the logs composing the raft became separated at the upper end, spreading out like a fan, and White was thrown into the water. He struggled to the side by means of his rope, and with a desperate strength held

the logs together till they floated into calmer water, when he succeeded in re-fastening them.

White's trials were not yet at an end, and in relating the following incident he showed the only sign of emotion exhibited during his long narrative. About four miles below where the raft separated he reached the mouth of a large stream, which he has since learned was the Colorado Chiquito. The cañon through which it enters the main river is very much like that of the San Juan, and though it does not discharge so large a body of water, the current is much more rapid and sweeps across the great Colorado, causing, in a deep indentation on the opposite bank, a large and dangerous whirlpool. White saw this and tried to avoid it, but he was too weak for the task. His raft, borne by the current of the Colorado proper, rushed down with such force, that aided by his paddle he hoped to pass the waters that appeared to sweep at right angles across his course from the Chiquito. When he reached the mouth of the latter stream the raft suddenly stopped, and swinging round for an instant as if balanced on a point, it yielded to the current of the Chiquito, and was swept into the whirlpool. White felt now that all further exertion was useless, and dropping his paddle, he clasped his hands and fell upon the raft. He heard the gurgling waters around him, and every moment he felt that he must be plunged into the boiling vortex. He waited, he thinks, for some minutes, when, feeling a strange swinging sensation, he looked up to find that he was circling round the whirlpool, sometimes close to the vortex and again thrown back by some invisible cause to the outer edge, only to whirl again towards the centre. Thus borne by the circling waters, he looked up, up, up through the mighty chasm that seemed bending over him as

if about to fall in. He saw in the blue belt of sky that hung above him like an ethereal river, the red-tinged clouds floating, and he knew the sun was setting in the upper world. Still around the whirlpool the raft swung like a circular pendulum, measuring the long moments before expected death. He felt a dizzy sensation, and thinks he must have fainted; he knows he was unconscious for a time, for when again he looked up the walls, whose rugged summits towered 3,000 feet above him, the red clouds had changed to black, and the heavy shadows of night had crept down the cañon. Then, for the first time, he remembered that there was a strength greater than that of man, a Power that "holds the ocean in the hollow of His hand." "I fell on my knees," he said, "and as the raft swept round in the current, I asked God to aid me. I spoke as if from my very soul, and said, 'O God! if there is a way out of this fearful place, guide me to it.'" Here White's voice became husky, as he narrated the circumstance, and his somewhat heavy features quivered, as he related that he presently felt a different movement in the raft, and turning to look at the whirlpool, saw it was some distance behind, and that he was floating down the smoothest current he had yet seen in the cañon.

Below the mouth of the Colorado Chiquito the current was very slow, and White felt what he subsequently found to be the case—viz., that the rapids were passed, though he was not equally fortunate in guessing his proximity to Callville. The course of the river below this he describes as exceedingly "crooked, with short, sharp, turns," the view on every side being shut in by flat precipitous walls of "white sand-rock." These walls presented smooth perpendicular surfaces as far as the high-water level, which left a distinct

mark about forty feet above the stage of the month of August. The highest part of the cañon, White thinks, is between the San Juan and the Colorado Chiquito, where he thinks the wall is more than 5,000 feet in perpendicular height, and at a few points far exceeding this. Dr. Newberry, the geologist of Lieutenant Ives' expedition, thinks that for a long distance the altitude is near 7,000 feet. Correct altitudes, however, can only be obtained by a careful instrumental examination.

The current bore White from the Colorado Chiquito slowly down the main river. One, two, three, four days had slowly passed since he tasted food, and still the current bore him through the towering walls of the cañon. Hunger maddened him. His thoughts were of food, food, food; and his sleeping moments were filled with Tantalus-like dreams. Once he raised his arm to open some vein and draw nutriment from his own blood, but its shrivelled, blistered condition frightened him. For hours, as he floated down, he would sit looking into the water, yet lacking courage to make the contemplated plunge that would rid him of all earthly pain. The morning of the fifth day since he had tasted food he saw a flat strip of shore with bushes growing on it, and by a superhuman effort he succeeded in reaching it with his raft. He devoured the few green pods and the leaves of the bushes, but they only increased his desire for more. The journey was resumed, and he remembers two more days of unbroken cañon wall.

On the afternoon of the eleventh day of his extraordinary voyage he was roused by hearing the sound of human voices, and, looking towards the shore, he saw men beckoning to him. A momentary strength came to his arms, and grasping the paddle, he urged the raft to the bank. On reach-

ing it he found himself surrounded by a band of Yampais Indians, who for many years have lived on a low strip of alluvial land along the bottom of the cañon, and the trail to which from the summit of the plateau is only known to themselves. One of the Indians made fast the raft, while another seized White roughly and dragged him up the bank. He could not remonstrate; his tongue refused to give a sound, so he pointed to his mouth and made signs for food. The fiend that pulled him up the bank, tore from his blistered shoulders the shreds that had once been a shirt, and was proceeding to strip him entirely, when one of the Indians interfered, and, to the credit of the savage be it said, pushed back his companion. He gave White some meat, and roasted mezique beans to eat, which the famished man devoured, and after a little rest he made signs that he wanted to go to the nearest dwellings of the white men. The Indians told him he could reach them in "two suns" on his raft. Early the next morning he tottered to the bank, and pushed into the current. Three more long days of hope and dread passed slowly by, and still no signs of friends. Reason tottered, and White stretched himself on the raft, all his energies exhausted; life and death were to him alike indifferent.

Late in the evening of the third day after leaving the Indians, and fourteen days from the time of starting on this perilous voyage, White again heard voices, accompanied by the rapid dash of oars. He understood the words, but could make no reply. He felt a strong arm thrown around him, and he was lifted into a boat, to see manly, bearded faces looking down upon him with pity.

In short, Callville was reached at last. The people of this Mormon settlement had warm, generous hearts, and,

like good Samaritans, lavishly bestowed every care on the unfortunate man so miraculously thrown into their midst from the bowels of the unknown cañon. His constitution, naturally strong, soon recovered its terrible shock, and he told his new-found friends his wonderful story, the first recital of which led them to doubt his sanity.

TEN DAYS' JOURNEY IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA.

By William A. Bell, B.A., M.B. Cantab., F.R.G.S.

If the reader will glance for a moment at a map of the western portion of the United States—I mean that which lies west of the Rocky Mountains—the two most southerly territories will be found to be New Mexico and Arizona. Across the southern portion of these regions a river, called the Rio Gila, will be seen, passing from east to west until it reaches the Rio Colorado.

The district lying between this river and the present boundary line of Old Mexico is often called the "Gadsden ten million purchase," because in 1854 it was bought from Mexico by the United States for that number of dollars. The boundary line at first proposed, after the war of 1848, was to have been, for most of the distance between the Rio Grande del Norte on the east and the Rio Colorado on the west, the bed of the Rio Gila. But even as far back as this, the Americans were contemplating a trans-continental railway, and the explorations which had then been made tended to show that the only great depression in the centre of the continent, between the lofty chains of the Rocky Mountains and the still grander ranges of Central America, lay a little below the Rio Gila.

It was said, and with perfect truth, that if the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans were to rise to the height of 4,000 feet,

they would meet about the 32nd parallel of latitude in the vast plateau, the Madre Plateau, which lies south of the Rio Gila; while the greater part of the continent to the northward, as well as the plateaux of Mexico to the south, would form two huge islands separated by this strait.

In Colorado territory, the greater part of which averages from 8,000 to 10,000 feet above the sea, the Rocky Mountains bifurcate to the southward and gradually become less and less in height, until, on reaching the 36th parallel, they can no longer be said to exist. Between these forks rises the Rio Grande del Norte, discovered by the Mexicans before De Soto saw the Mississippi, and called *del Norte* because it was to them the most northern river on the continent.

The Madre Plateau, then, is a vast plain, extending from the Rio Grande on the east for three degrees westward, and separating the Rocky Mountains from those of Mexico. In the summer of 1867 I became a member of a very extensive surveying party, organised by the Great Pacific Railway Company, for constructing a trans-continental railway from St. Louis, westward through Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California to San Francisco, and it fell to my lot to cross this plateau in my wanderings in the Far West.

Two surveying parties were entrusted with the survey and examination of the districts south of the Gila River, each consisting thereabouts of the following:—Twenty-five engineers, made up of levellers, transit-men, topographers, draughtsmen, axe-men, flag-men, &c.; thirty cavalry, furnished by the Government as escort; cooks, teamsters, strikers, &c. Seven wagons carried the provisions and baggage, and three more were required by the escort, so

that in all each party mustered about seventy men, including two or three native guides, ten wagons, sixty mules, and about forty horses; we also found it most desirable to drive a small herd of cattle along with us, to enable us to kill an

TENT OF THE SURVEYING PARTY.

ox once or twice a week, as occasion required. One party was under the direction of a Mr. Runk, the other of Mr. Eicholtz, both capital fellows, and able men in their profession as engineers. I was attached to Mr. Eicholtz's party, and had at my disposal, in addition to a good riding

horse, a four-mule ambulance, in which I carried my medical stores and photographic materials, for I combined both the offices of doctor and photographer.

Upon leaving the Rio Grande, and turning our course westward, our party occupied themselves in trying to find a practical route as far to the north of the Madre Plateau as possible. Several mountain spurs extend down from the north into the plateau, and our object was to discover any short cuts through them, while Mr. Runk's party were running a continuous line in the more level country to the south of us. The first obstacle we encountered on leaving the Rio Grande was Cooke's range, and through this we discovered a fine pass ten miles long, with easy gradients and a good supply of water; we then crossed a plain about forty miles wide, a continuation northward of the "Great" Plateau. About half-way across this plain is a large hot spring, called *Ojo Caliente*, which issues from the top of a mound some thirty feet high. It is probably the crater of an extinct volcano.

On Friday, October 25th, 1867, we left Ojo Caliente, and came, in less than three miles, to a very fine spring, which bubbled up vigorously from the ground in a little basin surrounded by lofty cotton-wood trees. The water, however, was hot, but not so hot as that we had left. Here we camped while a reconnaissance was made in advance to discover water and to direct the course of the survey; for we had followed neither road nor trail since leaving the Rio Grande. In the evening the little party returned, and reported open country ahead, but no water, at least for twenty miles, the distance they had been. It was, however, determined to fill up the water-kegs, eight in number, each holding ten gallons, and to push forward to

THE YUCCA IN BLOSSOM.

some willows and cotton-wood trees about eighteen miles distant, where we hoped by digging to find a spring. At sunrise next morning (Saturday) we started, traversing a slightly undulating plain, covered, as far as the eye could reach, with the most magnificent pasturage. For five miles, as we followed a dry valley or trough in the plain, our route passed through a continuous grove of cactus plants, averaging from ten to twenty feet in height. Here and there a Yucca plant, or "Spanish bayonet," shot up its lofty stems amongst the cacti, adding very much to the grotesqueness of this curious vegetation. The cactus groves were as thickly stocked with the Gila "quail," a species of grouse, as a moor in Scotland with its feathered game of a similar kind. Enormous coveys of thirty or forty brace rose up on each side as we passed, and ran along in front of our horses.

On reaching the willows, all our digging failed to produce a drop of water; so after trying several places, both up and down the dry bed of a stream, we were obliged to put up with a dry camp. The poor horses, as usual in such a plight, looked the picture of misery after their dusty march, and seemed to ask with their eyes, "Why are we forgotten?" We chained up the mules with extra care, and let them kick away to their heart's content, and make the night hideous with a chorus from their sixty dry throats. Sunday, throughout the expedition, was generally kept as a day of rest; but this was an anxious day to us, for, besides the mules, we had four horses and five oxen, and scarcely water enough for cooking and drinking purposes. I joined the water-hunters at daybreak, and armed with spades and picks, as well as our carbines and "six-shooters," we directed our course towards the Burro Mountains, the next

obstacle to the westward. We had, in fact, nearly crossed the plain between Cooke's range and these mountains, and soon entered a ravine leading up to them. After ascending for seven miles, we were gladdened by the sight of a little water trickling over some rocks. The first glance satisfied me that all was right, and in a few minutes holes were dug in the dry bed, which quickly filled with good spring water.

The water question being thus satisfactorily arranged, a messenger was sent back for the whole party, while we continued our ride, for the purpose of exploring the mountains, and of finding a cañon supposed to cut through them near our point of junction. We had received very conflicting reports about this range (the Burro Mountains). At a distance of some twenty or thirty miles it does not appear an imposing obstacle, for it seems to consist of three mountain masses, united by two long low ridges; but on approaching these ridges they turned out really to be only long undulations of the plain, which hide from view very rough and formidable mountains behind them. Our first surprise occurred when, on reaching the top of the ridge, we found the real mountains still in front of us. We pressed on, however, and after a few more hours' riding the crest of the main range was gained, and one of the grandest of panoramas burst into view at our feet. To the south lay numerous isolated ranges and peaks, whose names we did not know, stretching far into Old Mexico, and rising out of the great Madre Plateau, which lay between us and them, like lofty rock-islands from a motionless sea. To the south-east the graceful Florida mountains retained their usual outline, while far beyond them the curious peaks of the Oregon range, whose fluted basaltic columns justly suggest the name "organ mountains," were distinctly visible near

ENTERING THE CAÑON.

the horizon, although situated east of the Rio Grande, more than 100 miles distant from us. Due east of us lay the range we had left, with Cooke's Peak rising nobly from its centre, and the exit of our pass (Palmer's Pass) distinctly visible. Still following the circle towards the north, the confused mass of the Miembres Mountains came into view; then those of the Santa Rita and Pimos Altos, semi-detached portions of the same. Quite to the north, twenty or thirty miles distant, some very high snow-capped mountains were conspicuous, forming part of that great system of mountains—the Mogollon Ranges, north of the Rio Gila, the home of the bloodthirsty Apache—which has never yet been explored.

The elevation upon which we stood was, in fact, the dividing ridge of the North American continent; the little watercourse at our feet was the first we had reached which flowed down the slopes leading to the Pacific; and the broad arid plains which lay between us and our next obstacle to the westward gave a most extensive forecast of our future course. Nearly forty miles of almost complete desert, with little chance of a drop of water, formed the undulating plain between us and the next westward range—the Peloncello Mountains. To the south-east a secondary range, called from its conical peaks the Pyramid range, filled up further south a part of the centre of this vast tract. Our field of vision did not even end with the Peloncello Mountains, for Juan Arroles, our guide, pointed out in the dim horizon, far beyond them, the rounded peak of Mount Graham, and the two sharp heads of the Dos Cabasas, the most prominent landmarks in the Pino-leno range, and the boundaries on each side of Railroad Pass. These ranges all lay far below us: they evidently rose from a much lower

level, and seemed to show, even to the eye, that the ground sloped rapidly down towards the west. So extensive a panorama as that which I have attempted, however feebly, to describe, could never be witnessed in Europe, or in any country where the atmosphere is much impregnated with moisture. For more than 100 miles, in almost every direction, nothing seemed to limit the extent of our vision but the incapability of our eyes to distinguish objects which were rendered too small from their remoteness.

Our guide knew the cañon we were in search of, and brought us next day directly to its head. It was not by any means a gap in the range, but only a large and well-defined gorge on the western side. We followed it down to the plain. Two miles from the summit a large spring of clear cold water flowed from beneath a perpendicular mass of rock, and formed a stream, which we followed until the cañon, cut out by it, became so narrow and so filled up with rocks and vegetation that we were obliged to bear away to the right, and strike it again lower down. The stream had disappeared in the interval, and the cañon from this point gradually widened out, lost its fertility, and entered the plain as a dry open valley, trending towards the Gila, scarcely twenty miles distant. The length of this cañon, from its head above the spring to its entrance as a cañada or valley on the plain, is about thirteen miles. For half its course many large and beautiful trees adorn the path, amongst which we recognised sycamore, a very beautiful species of evergreen oak very much resembling holly, a black walnut (*Juglans Whippleana*), rough-barked cedar (*Juniperus pachydermia*), pines, piñons, acacia, cypress, mesquit (*Algarobia glandulosa*), plum, and several species of cactus. An Indian trail led through the entire length of the cañon, including

the two miles of very narrow gorge, as well as over the hill, by which route we avoided the latter; and it was evident from the recent pony-tracks that the Red Men still used it, and were probably well acquainted with all our movements. Other signs were recognised by our guide, such as bunches of grass tied up, and arranged so as to point in particular directions, and were looked upon as conclusive evidence of the activity and watchfulness of our hidden but ever-present enemies. Game was abundant; two kinds of quail, black and white tailed deer, bear, beaver, squirrels, and hares innumerable. Extensive fires had burnt down the bushes and laid bare large tracts of land all along the base of the mountains. While taking advantage of the delay which the difficulties of the country necessitated to enjoy a little deer-stalking and grouse-shooting, Lieutenant Lawson, who commanded our escort, and myself were attracted during our rambles by a curious wall of rock which fringed, like a trap-dyke, the summit of a rather lofty range of foot-hills. On reaching the top we found that it consisted of a thick stratum of marble, which had been tilted up vertically to the height of from seven to twenty feet above the ground, and that it extended for miles both ways along the hill-tops. This wall was beautifully variegated with white, grey, and red marbles, and presented the finest, as well as the most singular, exposure of the kind I have ever seen. In many places through the mountains we found quartz ledges, giving good indications of gold; and near the marble wall a vein of galena cropped out, of considerable width. Over this vein I shot a new and beautiful species of mountain grouse. Four days were occupied in trying to find a good pass through the range, but our efforts were useless. We found, after surveying to the summit of the ridge which

skirted the base of the mountains, that it was 1,208 feet higher than Ojo Caliente, twenty-three miles distant, and that the average grade for the last three miles had exceeded 160 feet per mile, and this, too, before the mountains themselves had been reached. These Burro Mountains were not, as they appeared to be, an ordinary range rising from the plain, but the crowning ridge or summit of the great continental water-parting; and although they rose from a much higher base than the ranges to the east and west of them, the slope up to their base was not rapid enough to be distinctly apparent without the aid of our surveyors' levels. Nothing remained for us, therefore, but to abandon the line which we had been surveying, and to pass around the southern extremity of the range, twenty miles distant, on the great Madre Plateau, in which level district Mr. Runk's party was then at work.

October 31*st.*—A march of seventeen miles parallel to the mountains brought us to Soldier's Farewell, a solitary ruin, which was once a station on the mail route, during the short time it was established along the 32nd parallel. Two miserable water-holes are the great source of attraction in this place. We feared they might have been empty, as it was the end of the dryest season of the year, but a shower of rain early that morning had providentially filled them partly up again. While we looked at the thick green puddle, full of creeping things, slime, and all sorts of abominations, from which we had to drink, a feeling of dread for the future involuntarily crept over us.

The whole country had changed, for we had at last entered that vast plateau upon the 32nd parallel, which had so long been considered the only practicable line for a railway route across the continent. How thoroughly I

pity the lover of the beautiful in Nature who is obliged to traverse this frightful plain from El Paso on the Rio Grande to Apache Pass. Although the mountains were still close to us, the landscape was as dreary as could well be conceived. At the bottom of a hollow, caused by some broken ground, lay the two putrid water-holes or ponds, overlooked by the tumbledown walls of a *coralle* and *ranche*. Before us extended an endless parched-up waste; some places were covered with poor grass, others were perfectly bare; and as the wind swept over them clouds of dust were driven along, or whirled up into the air like pillars of smoke.

From Soldier's Farewell we marched westward to the next water-hole. "Barney Station" (twenty-one miles), also an uninhabited ruin like that we had left, and, if anything, more dreary. There were no mountains near it, the land looked a dead level on every side, and not far distant towards the south lay what the Mexicans call a huge *playa*, or dry lake. Over such a tract you may travel fifty miles in a straight line, without crossing a water-course. When it rains the water collects in whatever part of the almost mathematically level flat happens to be slightly depressed, and it often covers many square miles of land to the depth of a foot or less. In such places even the scanty grass of the desert will not grow, and the whole earth becomes covered, as soon as the rain-water has evaporated, with a hard white shining crust resembling cracked china, thus forming a *playa*. The water-hole was here (Barney Station) even more disgusting than those we had left, for it served to water not only the men and stock of the "bull trains" and troops which passed through the country, but all the wild animals dwelling within a radius of many miles. Flocks of birds, large and small, trooped to and fro all day

long; it was a beautiful sight to see them all swoop down together like a sheet of feathers, flutter for an instant over the pool, and then flit away. At sunset might be seen at a great distance a V-shaped figure approaching from the clouds: this would be a flock of ducks, geese, or teal coming for their evening bath. Unhappy stags and herds of antelope would stealthily approach, and, not liking the look of the intruders, make off again. Not so the wolves and coyotes; those fellows seemed to suffer frightfully from thirst, for after we had been in camp for a few hours they would become so bold, or rather so eager for water, that neither the whiz of our bullets about their ears nor the crack of our rifles was able to keep them away from the pool.

The extraordinary vividness of the mirage is one of the great peculiarities of this region. We recognised it often on the plains of Western Kansas and elsewhere, but it is not seen to perfection until the Madre Plateau is reached. Half an hour after sunrise is usually the best time to watch for it; then the distant mountains become distorted into the most grotesque and fairy forms. Magnified to many times their natural size, they appear lifted into the sky, and are there cut up, sometimes horizontally, sometimes vertically, by the peculiar magical haze which surrounds everything. Often they looked like terraced citadels; sometimes the phantasm takes a pillared form, and presents to the eye ruined temples like those of Greece or Egypt. This is not only the case with the mountains, for at a little distance everything appears distorted; the horses are changed into giraffes, the tents become elongated into snow-capped peaks, while the tufts of grass and the meagre scrubby vegetation are transformed into noble forests of gigantic trees; every little *playa* becomes a beautiful lake, from the waters of

which are seen reflected the magical transformations which all surrounding objects have undergone. So complete is the delusion, that I have often remarked to a companion, as we watched the horsemen ahead of us dashing through the midst of a phantom lake, in which waves, shadows, spray, and sunlight were all portrayed to perfection, "How is it possible thus to disbelieve one's senses in broad daylight?"

Barney Station is 4,211 feet above the sea, and this is about the average height of the entire plateau. During the two days' march from our camp at the foot of the mountains we had descended 2,000 feet. The sun was setting, and I was just securing a striking picture of desolation—that is, a photograph of Barney Station in ruins—when two strange objects appeared in sight. The one developed as it approached into a most dilapidated and old-fashioned coach, the other into an equally shaky spring-cart, and both were drawn by mules; two ladies occupied the former and half-a-dozen armed soldiers the latter vehicle. The gentlemen of the party, four in number, rode on each side of the coach, and completed the travelling "outfit."

Between the Rio Gila and the Mexican boundary, Arizona boasts of possessing one town, Tucson, on the Santa Cruz river, now I believe the capital of the territory. This was the destination of one of the fair travellers, a very pretty girl of sixteen, in whose veins the fiery blood of Spain had been softened, but not obliterated, by union with that of our own race; she was returning with her father, an American, having just completed her education at St. Louis. Her companion was on her way to join her husband at Fort Bowie, and to share with him the anxieties and solitude of a post which guards the most dangerous pass in Arizona

—Apache Pass. We shall presently get a glimpse of what such a life is. It is easy to fancy what extreme pleasure the presence of our fair friends gave us. They were just entering the most dangerous part of their journey, where defiles had to be passed through, in which half-a-dozen soldiers and four civilians were a very insufficient escort, so that we were delighted to render them the protection which increase of numbers afforded. On the afternoon of November 2nd Mr. Runk's party came in sight, and completed their survey up to our camp that evening. Since parting from us a month ago they had met with open country, and no obstacles but Cooke's cañon, through which their route lay. The Apaches had succeeded in driving off half their oxen, but beyond this all had gone well with them. Altogether we mustered a large party at Barney Station, and notwithstanding the mud puddle, of which we thankfully drank, and the dreariness of the place, we managed to make ourselves exceedingly jolly. A little whisky was discovered amongst "somebody's luggage;" the fatted calf, our best bullock, was killed and cooked; and many good stories and bold adventures were told around the camp-fires.

Next morning Lieutenant Lawson, commanding the escort, started with nine of our men and some empty wagons to Fort Bowie, for rations and forage; and our new friends, with Captain Colton, my tent mate, and myself, completed the party by joining him also.

For twenty-one miles we traversed the level plateau, and then entered the next range of mountains, the Peloncello range, halting a short distance within a pass leading through it, known as Stearn's Pass. At this spot was situated the only spring to be met with on the road. It was, however, dry on the surface, and we had not time to deepen it. A

beautiful conical mountain, Stearn's Peak, forms a good landmark for this pass and spring. From Stearn's Peak to Fort Bowie, in Apache Pass, leading through the next mountain range (the Chi-ri-ca-hui), the distance is thirty-six miles, without a drop of water, making in all a *jarmada* of fifty-seven miles without one drinking-station.

We rested until sunset at Stearn's Peak, in order to avoid the heat of the sun, and then started through the grandest part of the pass. The moon was almost at its full, the night was perfectly calm, and a liquid softness pervaded everything. These mountains were infested with Indians; and the ladies were rather nervous, as now and then we passed through a narrow part of the gorge, or underneath some lofty crag. To keep them in good heart we sang songs and choruses, in which they soon joined; these were re-echoed again and again from side to side. The cavalry rode in front, and the infantry brought up the rear. Now and again the horses' hoofs would ring out and rattle over a bed of rocks; or the moon, obscured behind the mountain, would suddenly throw a flood of light over the white wagons and glistening rifles of our party. The air had become very cool and refreshing, and the scenery for at least eight miles through the pass was so grand in its rugged barrenness, that, seen at such a time, it left an impression never to be forgotten.

A march of five hours, at the rate of four miles an hour, brought us to the Cienega de San Simon, where, as the name Cienega implies, there is, at some seasons of the year, a small marsh, with a little stream running through it. We found, as we had expected, no signs whatever of water, but plenty of good grass; so here we made our midnight halt.

Before daybreak next morning our fires were rekindled

and our coffee made, for we had carried wood with us from the pass; and before the sun had peeped over the eastern mountains we were again on our way.

Amongst the party was the mail contractor for this road. Twice a week a mail-carrier rides from Tucson to Fort Bowie, 106 miles; another then carries the mails on to Soldier's Farewell, 86 miles, where he meets the solitary mail-carrier, who has come from La Mesilla, 129 miles to the eastward. The mail-bags are exchanged, and each returns the way he came. The men who thus pass unguarded backwards and forwards through a hostile Indian country require no small share of reckless bravery. Their pay is high, being 200 dollars in gold (or £40) a month. The contractor told me that a year never passed without one or more of his mail-carriers being "jumped" by the Indians, under which circumstances he always made a point of carrying the mails himself for a fortnight, at least, over the very section of road upon which his man had been killed; after which he had never any difficulty in finding some one else sufficiently reckless to risk his life for the ordinary remuneration.

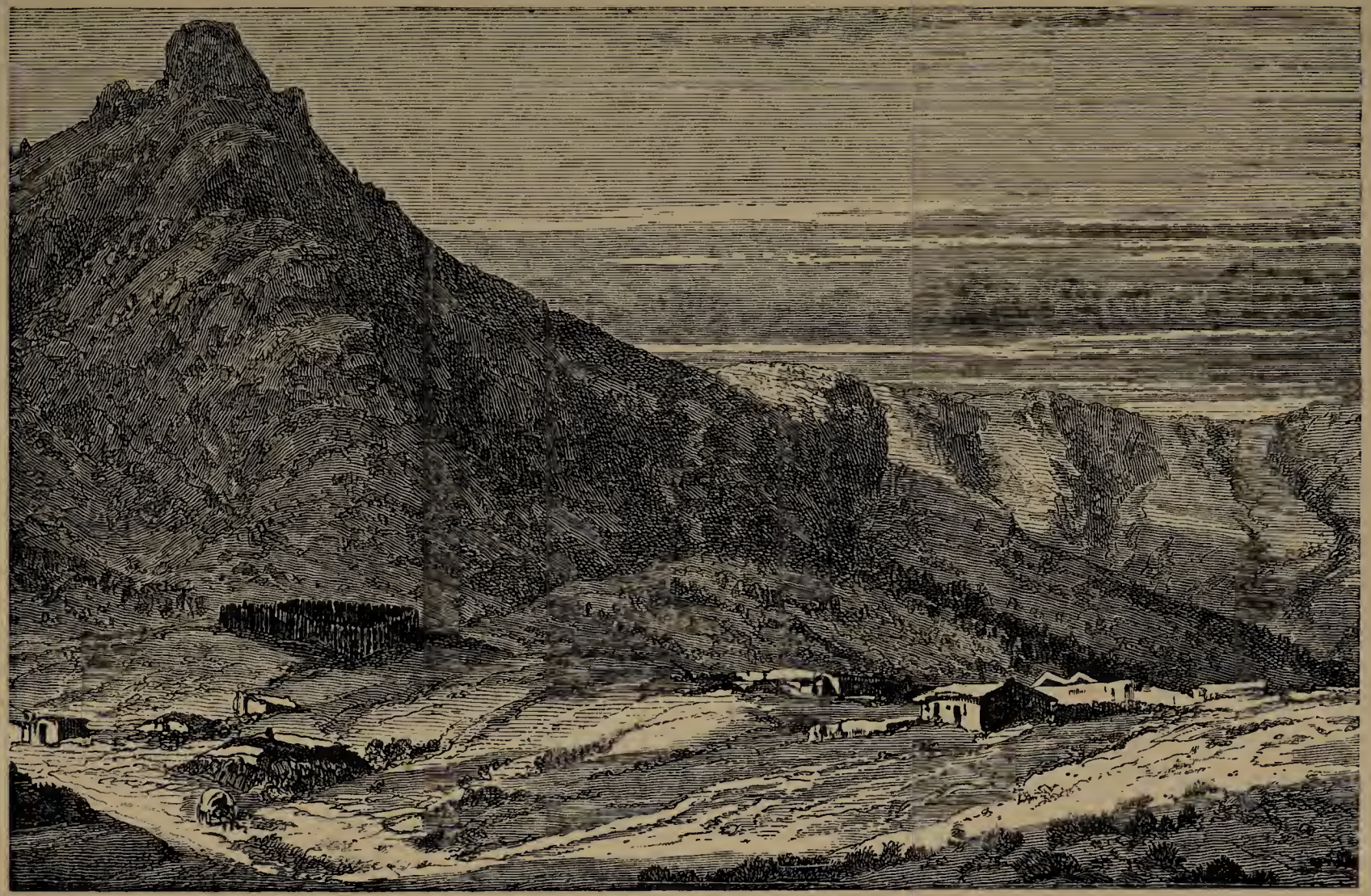
During the latter ten miles of our march most of the route lay through thick brushwood, composed of mesquit, grease-weed (*Obione canescens*), two species of aloe, yucca, a very large species of prickly pear, and other cacti, besides many kinds of thorny bushes, which formed an almost impenetrable thicket, very well adapted for an ambuscade. Here and there my companion pointed to spots where one or other of his mail-carriers had been killed, or where he himself had been "jumped," and related how he had escaped at this place by the speed of his horse, or at that by good service done by his revolver. Many of his anecdotes were most exciting, yet there was no apparent tendency towards

exaggeration ; while, on the other hand, he openly avowed that the more you have to do with Indian warfare, the more you dread the Indians and try to keep out of their way. "Men may be very brave at first, but the continual anxiety soon takes the dash out of them"—and this avowal came from a man of undoubted courage.

On reaching the mountains at the entrance of Apache Pass, he pointed to a foot-hill on the right, and gave me a little sketch of the Chi-ri-ca-hui Apaches during his residence on the spot. Until the winter of 1861-62, the Apaches of that range had not shown any very determined hostility to the Americans, and the mail company, for the two years during which they ran coaches along this route, kept on good terms with them, by giving occasional presents of blankets and food. At the breaking out of the rebellion, however, an upstart Federal officer, named Barkett, was sent to take charge of this part of the country, and soon after his arrival at the entrance of Apache Pass, where he formed his camp, some Mexicans applied to him about a boy of theirs, whom they suspected had been stolen by the Apaches. Barkett summoned the chief, Cachees, and his head men to the camp. Being on friendly terms with the troops, the Indians immediately responded to the summons. Cachees and his six head men, however, positively denied the charge of kidnapping the boy; upon which orders for their arrest were immediately given. Cachees, in a moment, slit open the canvas of the tent with his scalping-knife, and escaped ; his companions were all secured. A man named Wallace, who had long lived on the most amicable terms with the tribe, volunteered to go alone and treat with them. He did so, and sent back a message to Barkett that, in his opinion, the boy had not been stolen by them, but added that he himself

was retained as a hostage in their hands. Barkett became furious, and swore that he would hang the Red Men if the boy was not returned that night; and he kept his word. On the hill to the left, those half-dozen savages were strung up next morning, and, shocking to relate, poor Wallace, who had trusted so implicitly to the personal affection shown for him by the red-skins, was immediately hanged on the summit of the hill on the opposite side of the pass. This tragedy over, Cachees and his entire band fled back once again to their mountain fastnesses, never more to come in contact with the white man, unless in the execution of their unquenchable revenge.

Fort Bowie is situated about six miles up the pass. It consists of a small collection of *adobe* houses built on the summit of a hill, which rises as a natural look-out station in the centre of the defile, and commands the road both ways for two or three miles of its length. The only officers at the time of our visit were Lieutenant Carrol, Lieutenant Hubbard, and the resident surgeon; the only troops, one small company of forty men. The officers insisted upon Lieutenant Lawson, Colton, and myself sharing their quarters; they had not had a visitor of any kind for months, and had almost forgotten that the world was inhabited. After luncheon I strolled out upon a higher hill-top to choose a good position for taking a photograph of the fort and pass. The view was a very beautiful one, for we were hemmed in on all sides by lofty mountains, the most conspicuous of which is Helen's Dome, well shown in the engraving. Some two miles distant in the pass the sheep and oxen belonging to the fort were peacefully grazing, when suddenly I perceived a commotion amongst the garrison. All were hurrying to the highest part and looking towards the cattle, from which direction I heard



VIEW OF FORT BOWIE.

a few shots fired. It appeared on inquiry that the mail-carrier proceeding west to Tucson had only gone on his way a short distance past the cattle, just beyond the turning in the road which hid him from the fort, when he suddenly came upon two Indians who were stealthily creeping up towards the stock. Shots were exchanged, and he immediately turned back to give the alarm to the men guarding the cattle, and to the sentinels at the fort. The Indians showed themselves two or three times in the open and then disappeared. It was useless for us, with our wearied horses, to join in the chase after a couple of naked Red Men, so we remained behind.

So poorly supplied was this little fort—if such a term may be applied to a collection of mud huts—that two horses represented the entire stock. It was customary to keep one of them with the herd and the other in the stable, and the favourite chestnut of the lieutenant, a high-mettled, splendid creature, happened this day to be at home. It was immediately saddled. Carrol was quite young; he had only seen eighteen summers, and looked even younger, for his hair was very fair, and he had not the least tinge of whisker on his smooth cheeks. I remember watching him spring with one bound from the ground into his saddle, wave his hand merrily to us, and then dash down the steep winding road which led from the fort to the pass below. Again we saw him racing as fast as the horse could gallop along the pass after the mail-carrier, who, being previously mounted, had started off with the infantry. I went back to my photography, for there were many views I wished to obtain, but my friend, Lieutenant Lawson, could not remain long inactive. He was quite a character. Although very short, grey with years, and not in the least like a military man, he

was the gamest little fellow I ever met. So fond of soldiering did he become during the war that he could not settle down again to business. Though one of the steadiest of men, and a religious man—a great rarity out West—he actually left his good wife and family comfortably settled at Cincinnati, changed his social position from wholesale hardware merchant and ex-colonel of volunteers to simple lieutenant in the regular army, and started to join a Western regiment. The merest chance of a brush with the Indians was irresistible; so he ordered out his six men and their six jaded horses, and off they went down the winding road, and then away out of sight along the pass.

As the afternoon went by most of the infantry returned by twos and threes, and we were just sitting down to dinner when Lieutenant Lawson and his men rode into the fort. They had hunted about all over the mountains and through the ravines, but had encountered no savages, nor even caught a glimpse of a red-skin. Carrol, to our surprise, was not with them. We made inquiries, and found that all had reported themselves except the lieutenant and the mail-carrier. We questioned those who had gone the farthest, and a shepherd just back from over the hills, and these agreed that they had heard the distant report of fire-arms, coming apparently from the western plain. This was the direction the two red-skins had taken. So we saddled our horses without a moment's delay, and, with sickening forebodings in our hearts, started across the mountains to the western plain. We scrambled up the base of Helen's Dome, which was so steep as almost to baffle our horses, well trained as they were to all sorts of bad places; then, after skirting the side for some distance, we crossed a ravine to another mountain slope, down which we plunged, over large blocks

THE INDIANS WATCHING THE FORT.

of limestone and marble, leading our horses by the bridles, and clambering through them as best we could. Every moment was precious, for the sun had almost set before we reached the plain. Then we spread out in line, nine in number; for there was no enemy in sight, and our only hope was to strike the trail; for we knew they must have passed somewhere in this direction. Every eye was fixed on the ground, every blade of grass was closely scanned; our very souls were in our eyes. At last one marked "pony tracks," then another called out, "This way they lead," not two, three, or four tracks, but many—perhaps a dozen. The white men had evidently followed too far in pursuit, and, falling into an ambuscade, had been cut off from their comrades. Most of the hoof-prints were naked, only two were shod. These were certainly those of the missing horses. We could not hurry on very rapidly without losing the trails, and yet there was not half an hour's daylight. For three miles further we pressed on, carefully "tracking our way." We passed a spot much trampled down and blood-stained. Here the poor fellows had made a stand; had probably tried to cut their way back through their enemies, who were driving them from the fort. A little further, and all hope of *one* life was gone. The mail-carrier lay stretched upon the open plain—scalped, naked, and mutilated—in the setting sun. This poor man wore whiskers, and the savages produced even a more startling effect than usual by scalping one of them. Thus half of the face was stripped of skin, and the bleeding muscles were laid bare.

We could not stop a moment; but, dragging up two huge magay plants to mark the spot, we followed the pony-tracks. The sun sank, and it was only by the red glare thrown up from behind the horizon, and reflected by the

bare mountains of rock to the east of us, that we were able to track our way. So difficult was it at last that we began to despair of ever learning the fate of poor Carrol. We longed to see his dead body; for the idea of being taken alive to be tortured and roasted over a slow fire, whilst the fiends danced round him, and exulted over his agony, was the one dread consummation which made our blood run cold. No one spoke, for we all knew well that such would be his fate, if that sun had not shone upon his corpse.

As we took a last searching look over the dimly-lighted plain in front of us, we saw an object move slightly on the grass. We quickly rode towards it, and in half a mile further we found that it was the faithful dog of the lieutenant. He was guarding the stiff and lifeless body of his master. So we wrapped the naked body in a saddle-cloth, and tied it on a horse.

But for the moon, we should not have found the spot where the mail-carrier lay. We placed him also on another horse, and then turned our faces towards the pass. The wolves were already gathering round the spot, and the night winds were blowing up cold and chill. The night before, that same beautiful moon, which now shone peacefully down upon us, had lighted us through the noble gorge in the Peloncello mountains, while we sang choruses and enjoyed the grandeur of the scene. This night she lighted us through another gorge, in another range of mountains—Apache Pass—but how different were our feelings, as slowly we marched in mournful silence over the nine miles which led up to the fort! Thus ended the 5th of November.

Next morning we buried the poor fellows in the little graveyard amongst the mountains. The doctor read the burial service, and Lieutenant Hubbard, Colton, Lawson,

INDIANS TORTURING CAPTIVES.

and myself, were the chief mourners. When the final volley had been fired over our two poor comrades, and I turned to glance at the tablets of their companions, I read on the wooden crosses over every grave but one and the same sad story of their fate—

"KILLED BY THE APACHES."

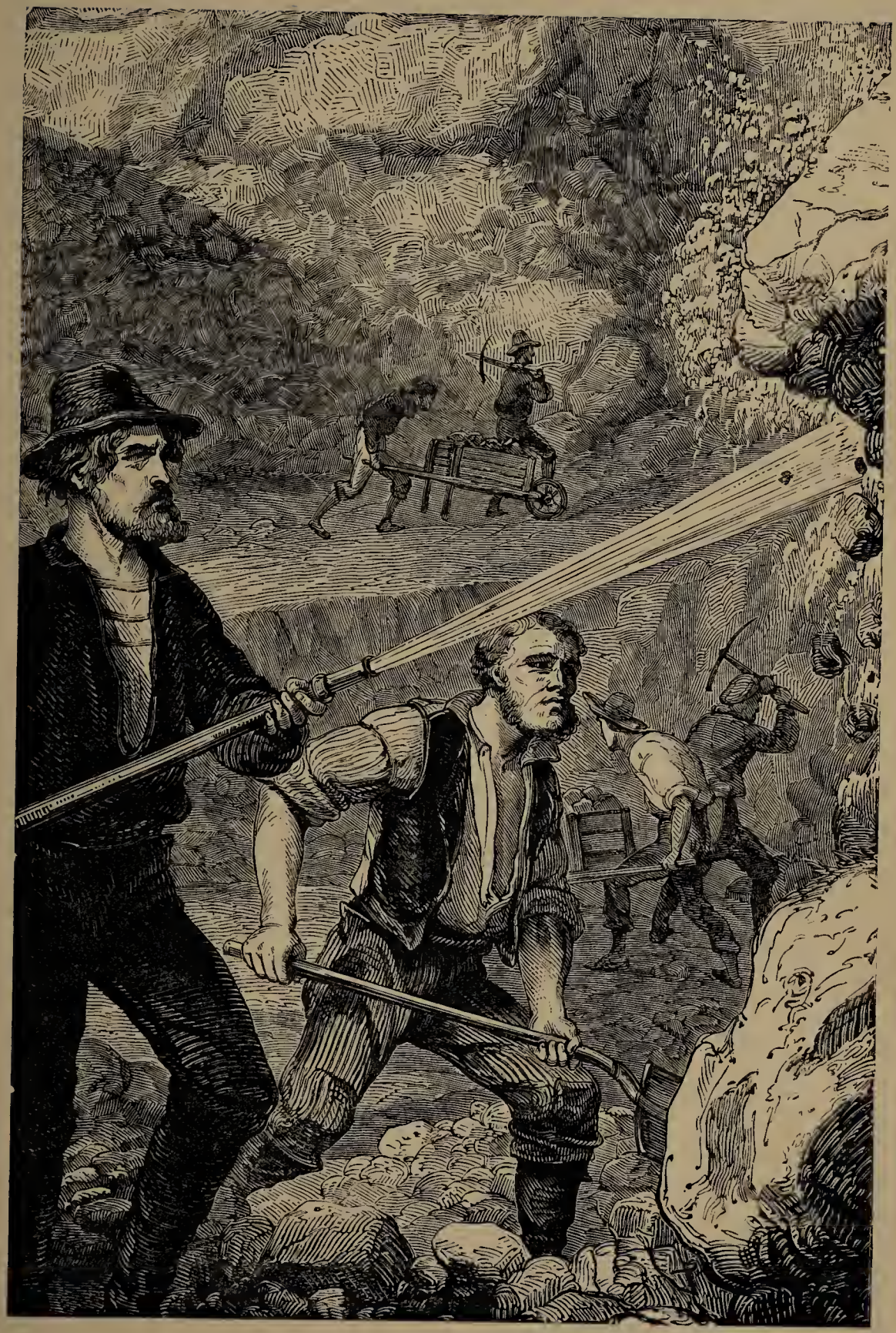
When Cachees' six best warriors were wantonly hanged five years before, that bold chief vowed that for every one of his lost comrades a hundred white men should die by the hands of himself and his band. Two more scalps were thus added to the long strings of those which already hung from the belts of the Chi-ri-ca-hui braves.

UNDER THE SNOW.

In the year of grace 1850 I dug gold in California, right in the heart of the Sierra Nevada. Men had wondrous adventures in those days, and not a few who sought for El Dorado in that year might be able to tell a worse tale of hardship than mine.

I and my "partner"—a tall, manly Kentuckian, who was afterwards a general in the Confederate army, and is buried before Vicksburg—had struck upon a profitable stream pretty far in the mountains, and turned out, with varying success, a good many golden ounces before winter began to close in. In the North the frost destroys all chance of mining in winter, unless in very deep shafts; the whole ground being frozen to the depth of several feet, leaving out of account the miserable nature of the work. But in California, owing to the dryness of the summer, the winter supply of water renders that season the most suitable for the gold-digger's purpose.

My partner, who like all his race was fond of amusement, would like to have taken a run to the "Bay," and knocked about San Francisco, the wonders of which, since we had last seen it, the new comers were never tired of describing in glowing language. Our "claim," however, was just then turning out better than ever, and he had half persuaded himself to remain, when a fall which I had on the mountain so sprained a wrist and ankle as to render me



MINING PARTY IN CALIFORNIA.

incapable of moving about for some weeks at least. This settled my friend; and at odd times, now and then, he would "cozete," or poke about in holes for gold, sometimes bringing in a nugget, and sometimes a rich lot of quartz, regular labour, without any assistance, being difficult. Often enough he would sit whole days talking to me, as I lay weary on my straw palliasse by the fire. He had to do all the cooking and household work beside, and most cheerily did the excellent fellow do it, though, down in "old Kentuck," his father was proprietor of the souls and bodies of—I am afraid to say how many "niggers." True, our establishment was not large. Clay (that was my partner's name) and I had built it in the space of a week, not working very hard either. It might be about twelve feet square, built of rough logs, and with a door, made with the axe, swinging on hinges forged out of a pair of old mining boots, and with a lock which we used to style "Clay's Patent." Yet it contained, besides our valuable selves and a nice lot of mining tools, a matter of three thousand dollars in gold dust, buried in the floor just under the fire-place. We built it under the lee of a huge overhanging rock, not only for shelter, but to make up for any shortcomings in the roof, which I must confess was rather a shaky concern; the mud chimney was solely Clay's architecture. Window we had none, but we had a good supply of train oil, which we had bought cheap at an auction down in the nearest mining town; so in winter we calculated to have light enough, while in summer we sat outside the door until it was dark, and then turned into bunk. It was in a beautiful valley, with *our* stream—creek we called it—running past the door, and snowy mountains and pine forests all around.

Altogether, as we surveyed it, after our work was finished, we unanimously concluded that "Profino Hall," as we dubbed it, was something of a credit to the architects. To resume. As winter closed in, snow began to fall heavily in the mountains, and little work could be done. My sprained limbs still kept me to my bed, and while the snow fell uninterruptedly outside, Clay would sit yawning or writing a long letter to the "old folks in Kentuck," portions of which he would read to me as he finished them, and I must say I have read many less amusing literary productions. On the second day he looked outside, and reported that it had ceased snowing and the sky looked clear, but that the snow was near about four feet deep, which was almost half the height of our cabin. To add to our discomforts, he intimated that, after making a survey of our provisions, he found they would only last till the next morning. The result of this was that he occupied the rest of the day in making a rough pair of snow-shoes and a little hand-sledge, with which he announced his intention of going to the store, which was distant some four miles, and the nearest hut station, for a new supply of provisions. The following morning he started after breakfast, promising to be back that evening. The house was now quite dark, so he left the lamp burning beside me, with a supply of oil within reach. With my wonderful faculty for passing time in sleep, the day wore away, and I awoke, as I thought, about night. The lamp had gone out, but I lit it again, and filled it up with oil.

The accumulated snow on our roof, with the last few hours of sunshine, had slid off, but now I could see it was snowing again, for through the chinks in the boards the flakes of snow were falling, and had accumulated in a tiny wreath across the floor. I was amused for some time in

watching the flakes falling, but soon that amusement was stopped by the roof getting covered with snow. Then I dropped asleep again, and when I awoke the oil was low down in the lamp. From this I knew that I must have slept about six hours, for old experience taught us that a lamp-full just lasted about eight hours. What could have become of Clay? I was now getting hungry—in fact, ravenous, but I knew there was no food in the place, the last had been finished at breakfast. Still I thought he must return very soon. In the meantime a rat or two, which somehow or other had found their way to our hospitable mansion, afforded me amusement. One big, greyish-looking patriarch, which had so long eluded our trap that we called him the "old soldier," would cautiously creep out to see if any crumbs had been left at the fire-side, or to snap up the bacon rind which was lying in the ashes. My revolver was hanging above my head, and taking a steady aim at him, I was fortunate enough to lay him dead on his back. Warned by the fate of the "old soldier," no more appeared, but—trifles go a long way in the Sierras—I chuckled at the astonishment Clay would indulge in when he saw our old enemy prostrate. But there were no signs of Clay yet. Then I laid about me, wondering what had kept him. Would it be the snow? No, it couldn't be that; he wasn't such a "missey" customer as to be scared by a shower of snow! One thing after another was thought of, and as speedily dismissed; until finally, with the usual changeableness of the human heart, I quite made up my mind that my partner had met with a number of cronies like-minded with himself at Diggerburg, and was spending his time drinking whisky and playing "cut-throat poker." That was just it! Twelve months' intimate acquaintance with my friend might

have taught me how ridiculous was this notion of his thoughtlessness, and selfishness, but at the time my ill nature and peevishness, induced by pain and hunger, never allowed me time to think of that.

MINERS' LIQUOR-BAR.

I had now, however, a grievance, and after the manner of ill-used men, felt more comfortable than I had done before. Inspirited by this charitable feeling towards my companion, I limped up at the risk of dislocating my foot, and hopped round to where our store of provisions used to

OUR VALLEY IN SUMMER.

be kept, to see if there was anything eatable; I was, however, disappointed—there was nothing. I then broke the ice on the water-bucket, and took a drink. This only sharpened my appetite, and with a delight impossible to describe I recollected that there was yet some bacon rind lying among the wood-ashes of the fire. Instantly excited by this great discovery, I looked for it, and snapped it up. This only made me worse, when I noticed the body of the "old soldier" lying close by. It required but a very few minutes to skin and disembowel him. I tried roasting his limbs by the lamp, but finding this a slow process, I devoured him raw, and I do not think I ever tasted anything more delicious. I felt now a little quieter in the stomach, and was thinking how I could supply myself with more food. Just then I was startled by a dull leaden sound overhead, several times repeated, and then all was quiet. A moment's reflection enabled me to guess my position. The hut was thoroughly snowed up, and this was an avalanche from the mountain behind, which the shelving rock had enabled to slide over it, leaving the roof almost uninjured. My feelings now became uncontrollable, for I was convinced that either Clay had been lost in the snow, or that the hut was so snowed up that he had been unable to find it again. Notwithstanding my sprained limbs, I managed to drag the table into the middle of the floor, thinking to remove a portion of the roof, in the hope that perhaps the snow might then fall inward, and enable me at least to let in the light of day; but just as I had succeeded in giving a blow or two with the axe, the table overturned, and I was precipitated to the floor with my ankle-joint dislocated. The pain was excruciating, but I was fully conscious of my situation. Giving up the task, I again dragged myself to

my bed and lay down. There was a closeness in the atmosphere, but I could breathe quite freely enough under the snow, as has been experienced by others in the same condition, and the place was not nearly so cold as it usually was without a fire. By-and-by the pain in my ankle got deadened, but the limb swelled much. Without assistance I could, however, do nothing. I was almost in despair, for I now knew that the hut was completely buried in the snow, and that my friend had perhaps been lost, so that, in all likelihood, no one would visit the hut until it was too late. It was different from another hungry experience I had had in the streets of San Francisco years before. Then I knew, if the worst came to the worst, I should not die—it was only a question of how long my pride would allow me to hold out. Pride now had nothing to do with it, and the question of holding out was limited to the few days I could live. I am not ashamed to say that, under these circumstances, I could not help weeping bitter tears. If my arms and legs had been all well, I might, with the mining tools, soon have dug my way out by the door, but in my present condition it was next to impossible, and even then to drag myself over the deep snow for four miles was out of the question. I might as well remain and die where I was. I filled the lamp and lay down again, for I was beginning to feel cold. I must have slept a long time, for when I awoke the lamp was out. By this time the snow had descended the chimney, and was piled in a great wreath on the hearth, and things looked as dreary as they well could. I now thought that I might be able to subsist on the store of train oil we had, and urged on by my gnawing appetite I swallowed a mouthful. I had, however, miscalculated the strength of my stomach, for I almost immediately vomited

it. It was very rancid; still I tried again and again, but repeatedly failed to retain it.

I now made another effort to dig myself out. Opening the door, a wall of firm snow met my gaze. Into this I pushed long mining shovels and crowbars until my strength failed me. We had only a few ounces of gunpowder in the house, and even if we had more, I found myself so weak that I could not use it. Faint and exhausted, I lay down on the clay floor, unable to move. Meanwhile I heard the same dull leaden sounds as before. Were they more avalanches, or was the snow melting off our house? Crawling across the floor I drew my blanket over me, determined to wait the end. Just then a scrap of newspaper caught my eye; it had been wrapped round some groceries, and had been tossed about the floor unnoticed until now. A word or two arrested my attention, and though I would fain not have read, I could not resist the temptation. It was a piece of the *California Star*, containing an account of the horrible sufferings of a party of emigrants from the Eastern States whom the snows in these very mountains had overtaken. It was one of the most harrowing incidents in all Californian history, and I perused it with a double interest, for I had been one of the rescue party who had saved the remnant from death, and my name was frequently mentioned on the scrap.

A more shocking scene cannot be imagined than that witnessed by the party of men who went to the relief of these unfortunate people. The bones of those who had died, and been devoured by the miserable ones that still survived, were lying around their tents and cabins. Bodies of men, women, and children, with half the flesh torn from them, lay on every side. The wild, emaciated, and ghastly

appearance of the survivors added to the horror of the scene. Language cannot describe the awful change that a few weeks of dire suffering had wrought in the minds of these wretched and pitiable beings. Those who but one month before would have shuddered and sickened at the thought of eating human flesh, or of killing their companions and relatives to preserve their own lives, now looked upon the opportunity those acts afforded them as a providential interference on their behalf. Calculations were coldly made as they sat round their gloomy fire for the next and succeeding meals. Various expedients were devised to prevent the crime of murder; but they finally resolved to kill those who had the least claims to longer existence.

So changed had the emigrants become that when we visited them with food some of them cast it aside, and seemed to prefer the putrid human flesh that still remained. These, and even more horrible statements, were on the scrap of newspaper. I remember, when I finished reading them, being thankful, even in my misery, that I could never be tempted to commit cannibalism, for *I was alone.* I was now scarcely conscious of what was passing. Gradually lapsing into a heavy sleep, I was getting weaker and weaker, but perfectly conscious that I was sinking. All desire for food had left me—I simply felt weak. I had now lost all record of time, and was too faint to keep the lamp going, even had I so cared. At length I was awoke by a sudden stream of light piercing the roof, and I now saw that the snow had slid off. Soon after the sound of voices became perceptible. Although able to hear the voices, and even distinguish the men, I was perfectly unable to call out. Indeed, the effort to raise myself was too much for me, and I sank behind on my rough pillow unable to speak. I could see the roof-boards

THE SNOW-STORM.

drawn aside, and a pair of legs descending. I knew the trousers, too, on these legs: they were those of my lost friend Clay. Then more came down — men from the neighbouring mining village — Joe Horrocks, of Red Cat Gulch, and Jim Slocum, of Gongo-Eye Creek, and several more. I saw poor Clay—honest fellow—standing over me, with the tears running down his cheek, as he glanced round at the signs of my struggle, the overturned table, the tools in the snow block at the door, and the rat's skin, and could hear him say, "I'm blessed if I don't think poor B——'s gone in! No, he aint! he's breathing! I see his lips moving! Give us the whisky, Jim!" Then these rough, but soft-hearted men raised me up and poured some whisky down my throat, which instantly revived me. The snow was shovelled out, and the door opened again.

Soon the fire was lit, and food prepared; but it was long before my stomach would retain the slightest nutriment. Then I heard their story. It was as I expected. The snow had covered the whole valley, and hidden all the familiar landmarks. For days past they had been searching for the hut, but the snow was so deep that had it not been for a great snow-slide the day before they might never have been able to reach me. It was one of the greatest storms ever known in the Sierras. I, at least, am likely ever to remember it. Altogether, I had been eight days alone in the cabin.

After the lapse of many years, with what loving gratitude do I not remember how they nursed me, like a child, carrying me in their arms across the floor! When I was well enough, they wrapped me up, and made a stretcher of a blanket between two poles, and bore me over the snow, two and two, into Diggerburg, where the comforts of the little hotel

of that rough settlement, and the aid of a surgeon, gradually restored me to health and strength. I had, however, just got about enough of gold-digging, and soon took to a pursuit more to my liking, and with pleasanter associations.

FRONTIER ADVENTURES IN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

By W. S. Parfitt, C.E., F.R.G.S.

After a sojourn of several months in the upper provinces of the Argentine Republic in South America, I reached, in March, 1868, the city of Rosario, the capital of the Santa Fé province, intending to remain there for a short time, to await letters from Europe.

The city of Rosario, on the river Paraná, founded by the Spaniards in 1725, was of small importance until 1852, when the rapid increase of river traffic, owing to the emigration from Europe, and the more general use of steamers, caused Rosario to be looked upon as the best port on the Rio Paraná for the growing trade of the provinces. At the present time it contains more than 16,000 inhabitants.

At the time of which I write, many Englishmen and other foreigners landed there for the purpose of proceeding by the then recently opened Central Argentine Railway to the English, or, more properly, Scotch settlement, at Fraile Muerto.

My principal reason for making a stay in this place was to recruit my strength after several months' hard life in the upper parts of the country, and to wait for letters from home.

I had passed two days very pleasantly, looking about the city and making visits, and on the third evening, as I

was sitting in my room at the Hôtel de la Paix, the *mozo* (waiter) entered with a note from a French gentleman

INDIAN OF THE RIO QUARTO.

who was waiting in the *sala* (hall or waiting-room). It was a letter of introduction in favour of the bearer, M. Moustier, written by a friend of mine in Buenos Ayres. My new

acquaintance soon afterwards, over wine and cigars, gave me the following account of himself:—

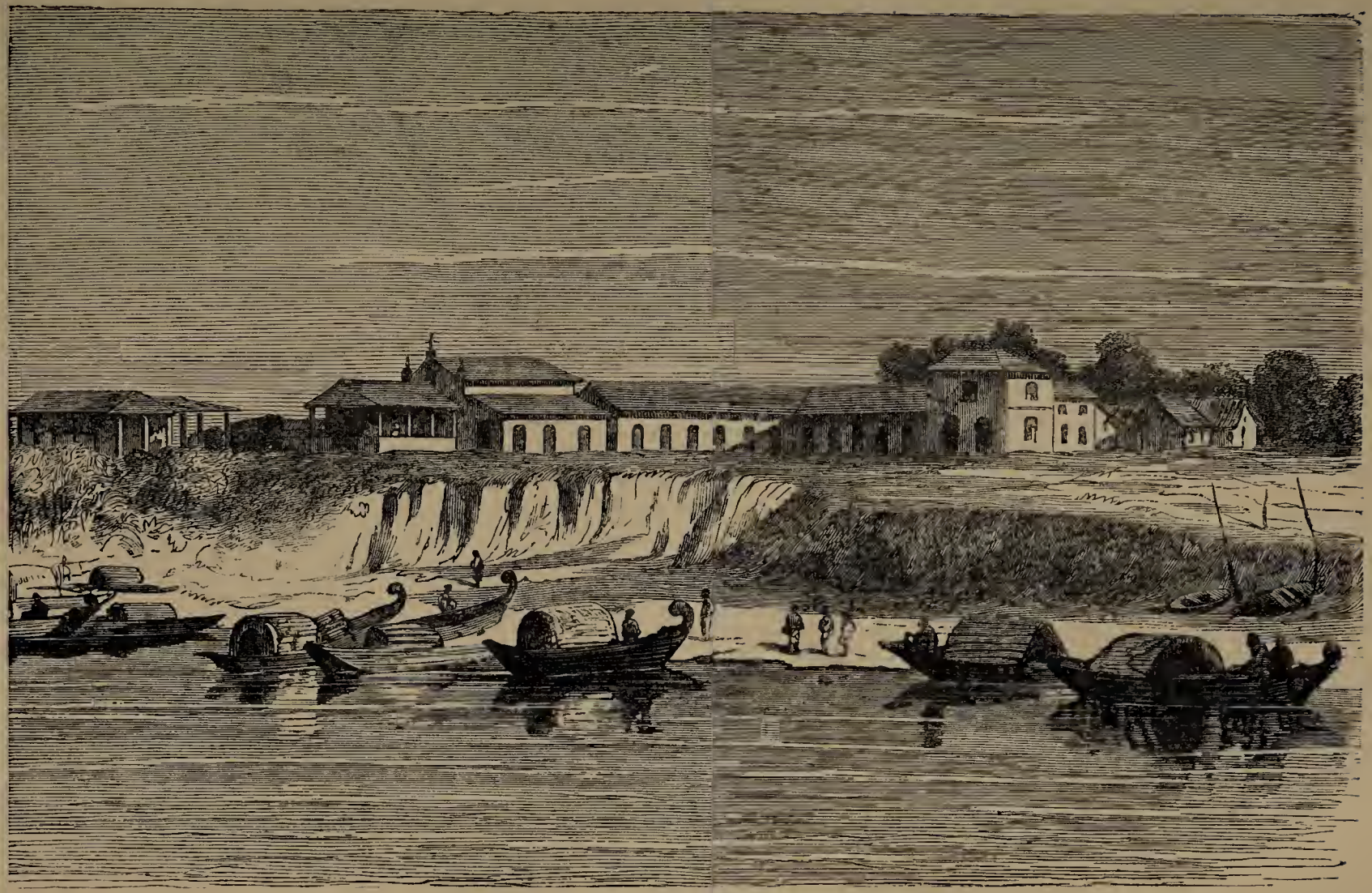
M. Moustier was the second son of a French gentleman of property residing near Bordeaux. He had been well educated, and had studied for the law; but belonging to a family well known for their Orleanist attachments, and himself of a free, impetuous disposition, he was persuaded by some of his companions to join one of the many conspiracies started in France against the Emperor Louis Napoleon. The plot was discovered, and the whole party were arrested; but he contrived to escape through the connivance of one of his guards, who proved to be the son of one of his father's tenants, and returned to his family, who judged it prudent to furnish him with the means of emigrating to South America.

Soon after his landing he received a letter from his father, advising him to stay at Buenos Ayres, and containing an order on a merchant there for a sum sufficient to start him in business. After remaining some time in the city he was advised to purchase some land, and turn sheep-farmer; this he did, and, on account of its low price, became the purchaser of two square leagues (about eighteen square miles) of land, with an *adobe*-built *estancia* (house built of unbaked bricks) within a few miles of the town of Rio Quarto, situated on the banks of the river of that name, and well known as a place never free from the attacks of Indians: this latter fact was not made known to him by the vendor, for obvious reasons, and it was not until after he had signed the requisite documents, and paid part of the purchase-money, that he learnt it from my friend Mr. B——, of Buenos Ayres, to whom he mentioned his purchase. This gentleman advised him strongly not to venture near his land for

several months, until some Government troops had been sent there, as was intended; but finding M. Moustier determined upon proceeding, and knowing that I was on my return from Cordova, he gave him a letter of introduction to me, asking me, as a favour, to give any advice or assistance in my power. With this letter he arrived in Rosario the previous day, and had seen me in the Plaza without knowing me; but on looking over the cards of visitors exposed at the entrance of the Hôtel de la Paix, he was agreeably surprised to find my name, and, after a few inquiries, sent me his letter and card.

Whilst listening to the foregoing details I made a close inspection of my visitor. He was evidently a gentleman, and spoke English fluently, having, as he afterwards told me, lived in England two years. He was apparently about my own age—thirty, tall, well-made, and with a cheerful, honest countenance, with which I was well pleased; and by the time he had finished and shown me the map, with his purchase marked thereon, I felt as much confidence in him as if I had known him for years, and told him if he would come and take breakfast with me the following morning, I would in the meantime consider the matter, and thus be better able to offer advice.

The next morning my new-found acquaintance made his appearance early, and together we had a good bath in the Rio Paraná whilst breakfast was preparing. After breakfast we resumed our conversation of the previous evening. I tried my best to dissuade him from making the journey, knowing well that the Indians had been recently seen in large numbers, even within a few miles of Fraile Muerto, 160 miles from this spot; and I had myself recently stopped at an *estancia* (farm) near that place, from whence they had



VILLAGE ON THE PARANÁ.

driven off all the cattle during my stay. My words proving of no avail, and finding him determined to proceed, I at last, at his earnest request, agreed to accompany him as far as Fraile Muerto, and from thence one day's journey into the pampa.

I proposed this route, although the longest, for several reasons. By going direct from Rosario to Rio Quarto, we should have the whole journey to perform on horseback, without water, and, being a very dry season, our horses would suffer from want of pasture; but by the way of Fraile Muerto we could go as far as that town by railway, and could there, no doubt, procure horses and a *vaqueano* (guide) to the exact spot we desired to reach.

The remainder of the day was spent in making preparations. My own were soon completed, but my companion's took more time; for when I asked him if he had the requisite things for such a journey, he replied in the affirmative, saying some friends in Buenos Ayres had supplied him with all sorts. This I quite believed, when I saw the number of articles they had loaded him with—overcoats, blankets, hats, guns, a long Enfield rifle, medicine chest, &c. This latter was nearly large enough to contain the whole of the rest, and was stocked with enough physic to kill or cure the whole of the inhabitants of the place. He had been induced to purchase all these things by some person who had brought them from Europe, but finding them an encumbrance, had been glad to part with them at any price. I selected a brace of very good revolvers, a good saddle and fittings, also a good blanket; then going into the town, bought him a belt to contain revolvers, bowie-knife, money, cartridges, &c.; then, after making some small purchases on my own account, returned to dine at the hotel.

At night, soon after retiring to bed, I was awakened by pistol-shots, sounding as if fired in the hotel; but after listening, and finding the noise was from the street, I tried to sleep again, but hearing several more shots, accompanied by shouts and screams, I rose, put on some things, went into M. Moustier's room, and finding him awake, we both ascended to the *azotea* (flat roof) of the hotel, where we found several more of the visitors assembled, watching a fearful fight in the street below, between some drunken Irishmen and some *gauchos* (roving horsemen) from the pampa. The latter used their *faccoones* (daggers. or knives, from eighteen inches to two feet in length) freely, killing one and wounding several more of the Irishmen; but getting more sober as their danger increased, the Irishmen used their revolvers with more effect, shot two of their opponents, wounded several more, and drove the remainder away. The *serenos* (watchmen, or police) then made their appearance, arrested two of the bystanders who had taken no part in the fray, and bore away the dead and wounded. This disgraceful scene did not appear to make any great impression on the citizens who witnessed it, as they are, I am sorry to say, familiar with such scenes.

Early in the morning we procured a cart, conveyed our baggage to the terminus of the Central Argentine Railway, and took our departure for Fraile Muerto at 8 a.m. In this trip a traveller has a fair chance of seeing the general aspect of the province of Santa Fé, and part of that of Cordova.

As this railway is destined ere long to be the longest in South America, a short description will be interesting to the reader. The commencement of the line is at Rosario, at which place the company have built a fine station and workshops, making their own bricks on the spot by steam

THE AMERICAN OSTRICH.

machinery. The line is single, five and a-half feet gauge, and laid down without timber of any kind, the chairs for holding the rails being cast in one piece, with a large hollow plate, which, resting on the ground, forms, when placed at intervals, of about three feet, a sufficient bearing for the rails. The carriages and locomotives are, I believe, of United States manufacture; the former are of the saloon type, with doors at both ends opening out on small galleries, where the guard stands to manage the brake; the guards as well as passengers are thus able to pass from one end of the train to the other through each carriage. The engines are fitted with "cow-lifters," for clearing cattle from the line. This railroad, in 1868, was completed as far as Villa Nueva, but since that time has been opened to Cordova, from whence arrangements are being made to extend it across the Andes to Copaipo, in Chili, when it will form a highway from England to Australia and New Zealand.

To return to the account of our journey. Leaving Rosario we passed some large *estancias* and *quintas* (country residences with gardens), then proceeded to the wild and extensive pampas of Santa Fé. Here at short intervals we rushed through herds of wild cattle and horses, and I was surprised to find how little they were frightened at us. We stopped at various stations on the road for water, and to leave provisions and stores for the men in charge of the stations, and those working on the line. As we got nearer the province of Cordova we fell in with large flocks of ostriches and several red deer; and for about six leagues (eighteen miles) before reaching Fraile Muerto we passed through *montes* (woods, or small forests) of algorroba, tala, quebracho, and other trees, tenanted by birds of all sizes and colours, from the eagle to the humming-bird. Many of

them are good songsters. At 4 50 p.m. we arrived at our destination, where we found a good, large, and substantial station, with waiting and refreshment rooms. In the latter, dinner was laid ready for all those passengers who wished it before again starting on their journey.

After making a good dinner at the station, we hired a cart and sent our luggage forward to the only *fonda* (inn) in the place, whilst we walked thither, for the purpose of getting a better view of the surrounding scenery, the station being about one mile from the centre of the town.

Upon leaving the station the road passes through land which has the appearance of a large English park ; in fact, so much so, that I once caught myself looking for some evidence of a mansion between the trees. We passed about three-fourths of a mile of this scenery, and then arrived at the banks of the Rio Tercero (Third River), a very rapid stream, rising in the Cordilleras near Cordova, and joining the Rio Paraná about half way between Rosario and the city of Paraná. In summer this stream is very much swollen from the snow melting in the Cordilleras. After some time spent in viewing the scenery from the river-banks, we paid a small toll, and passed over a good strong English-made iron girder bridge, about eighty yards long, recently erected to take the place of a dangerous ford close to this spot, where many bullock-carts have been carried away and lives lost when the water has been high. After crossing the bridge we found ourselves in the town of Fraile Muerto.

This was formerly an Indian village, and derived its present name, Fraile Muerto (literally, "Dead Friar"), from the fact of the Indians having killed a Jesuit priest sent there by the early Spaniards to convert them. The Spaniards, as they grew strong in numbers, advanced farther into the

country, and eventually took this town from the Indians, but it was re-taken by them and again lost many times, until at last it remained in the Spaniards' power; but even so late as a few months before our arrival the Indians had made an incursion, killed some of the natives living on the outskirts, drove off their cattle and horses, and very much alarmed the town.

Before the commencement of the railway the town consisted only of a few mud *ranchos* (huts), each of which was surrounded by a trench about ten feet wide by six or seven feet deep, for the purpose of preventing the attacks of the Indians, who seldom dismount from their horses to houses when thus fortified. At the present time new well-built *azotea* houses are being erected in all directions, gardens laid out, the Plaza fenced in, and many other improvements made. A great deal of this is due to the energy displayed by the Scotch immigrants, who have settled here in large numbers during the last two or three years.

After passing through the town, looking at the church and Plaza, we at last arrived at the *fonda*, kept by an obliging Italian, where we found our luggage all safe, and, passing inside, we were warmly greeted by some of the before-mentioned Scotchmen, some of them having known me on a former visit to this town. They made us both promise to visit them at their *estancias* before again returning to Buenos Ayres.

As we wished to start at sunrise on the following morning, I made inquiries for a *vaqueano*, and after a while a man appeared who proved to be a half-breed (of Spanish and Indian descent), of a most repulsive appearance, and my Scotch friends strongly urged us on no account to take him; but, making further inquiries, I could obtain no other, owing

to the dread of Indians being still in the vicinity, so that we were compelled to take this one, or go alone. After some bargaining (to which this class of men are well accustomed, and state their price accordingly), we agreed as to terms, and ordered him to be ready to start soon after sunrise, and to find five horses, one for himself, one for M. Moustier, and one for me, with two spare ones, in case of accidents.

After a long chat with the Scotchmen, we asked to be shown our beds, when the *fondista* told us they would be made up in the room in which we were then sitting as soon as we wished; but the appearance of the place being highly suggestive of nocturnal visitors, such as fleas and other insects, we preferred having our *catres* (a kind of folding X bedstead) placed outside the house, in the yard attached to the *fonda*, where we slept soundly until we were awakened by the sun shining in our faces the following morning.

Our *vaqueano* was waiting with the horses all ready. The countenance of this man by daylight had a more villainous expression even than last evening, and I mentally determined to keep a sharp look-out on his actions, but said nothing to my companion, not wishing to alarm him unnecessarily.

Before taking breakfast we strolled down to the river, near the bridge, in company with two of the Scotchmen, and had a most refreshing bath, although we could only swim *with* the stream, which here runs at the rate of five or six miles an hour. We then returned to the *fonda*, took a good breakfast, and having arranged our day's route, started with the intention of reaching and sleeping at an *estancia* marked on M. Moustier's map as about fourteen leagues (forty-two miles) from Fraile Muerto, and owned by an Englishman named Ball. Our course lay south-west, and

the distance to M. Moustier's *estancia*, as near as we could estimate from the map, was about forty-seven leagues, or about 141 English miles.

The morning was beautiful. A fine light breeze was blowing, which gratefully tempered the heat of the sun, whose rays would otherwise have been rather oppressive. We travelled until noon without stopping, when, finding a small *laguna* (lake, or large pond) with a few trees near it, we decided to stay in the shade for a two hours' siesta. We here watered our horses, and putting *maneas* (straps of hide, to fasten the two fore or hind legs together to prevent straying) on them, turned them loose to feed; for ourselves we mixed some *caña* (a native spirit made from the sugar-cane) and water, which with a few biscuits gave us a fair luncheon, and laid down under the trees and slept for about two hours, after which we rose, caught and mounted our horses, and resumed our journey. From this time to our arrival at Mr. Ball's *estancia* at sunset, we passed over the silent and level pampa, without trees, water, or hillocks; the grass seemed also to be all of one height, not a single tuft rose higher than another, so that, looking around, nothing obscured the horizon in either direction, nor was there any object to serve as a landmark, the traveller in these parts having to find his way by the sun's shadow, or by a constant reference to his pocket compass.

Once or twice we saw some ostriches, a few deer, and several owls, these latter winking and blinking at us from their perch at the entrance to the burrows where they hide.

These *biscachareas*, or burrows of the *biscacha*, excited the curiosity of my companion. We rode round one of the largest of the masses of burrows, to examine it. It com-

prised a large bare spot of ground, of about two acres in extent, in various parts of which were holes resembling in appearance those made by our rabbits, but much larger; these all terminated in large chambers about three to four feet in diameter, and four feet high. These chambers are the residences of the animals, which are of about the size of an English badger, and in appearance between a badger and a rabbit. They are covered with fur of a dark grey colour on the backs, and white underneath. Their heads are large, and have a white mark passing beneath each eye, and extending to the point of the nose. They have thick whiskers, composed of long black bristles. Their ears are rather short and rounded; the fore legs are slender and short; the hinder ones are longer, and similar in form to those of a rabbit. They only come out to feed between sunset and sunrise on the young grass, but are very partial to maize, European wheat, &c.

When attacked by dogs they defend themselves bravely, and sometimes come off victoriously. I once shot at one whilst I stood before its hole; but only wounding it, my legs were at once attacked and my clothing torn to pieces before I succeeded in destroying it. They seem to live on terms of friendship with the owls, which are always seen at the entrance to their holes.

Near every *biscacharea* we passed, we noticed a species of small and very bitter-tasted wild melon, which appears to thrive on the manure of these animals.

A short time before sunset, we were gladdened by the sight of Mr. Ball's *estancia*, and soon afterwards were warmly welcomed by that gentleman himself, who, seeing us approaching, rode out to meet us. On our arrival at the house, he ordered his *peones* (labourers) to look after our horses,

SHOOTING BISCACHAS.

and then made us enter the house, and soon after partake of a hearty supper.

Before retiring to rest we made known to our host the object of our journey, and were much pleased to hear him say that there need be no present fear from the Indians, as they were retreating beyond the frontiers, having heard that troops had been sent against them; but, at the same time, advised us to be on our guard against our *vaqueano*, as he had on more than one occasion known him to have been suspected of giving information to the Indians. This strengthened my previous resolution to keep a good watch on his movements, and at the first sign of treachery to shoot him. After listening to several accounts of the dangers of frontier life, we retired to rest, promising our hospitable host to stay a day with him before we resumed our journey.

The following morning we rose early, had a good wash in the cool water from the well, and whilst breakfast was preparing, took a view of the house and other farm buildings, which we were unable to see the previous evening. The house was built of bricks, with an *azotea* roof of the usual kind, but surrounded with a parapet, on which were mounted two small brass howitzers, with which our host informed us he had greatly surprised the Indians in their late raid; for not seeing any person about the place, they ventured rather closer than is usual with them, no doubt with the intention of stealing two good black horses, which had purposely been left outside of the ditch running round the house, as a decoy. Not having any balls, our host had loaded the howitzers with old nails, broken chain links, broken glass, &c., and as the Indians came up, fired them both amongst them, badly wounding several men and horses. They turned and fled in the utmost haste, and he thought

would not attempt to again molest him. There were three rooms in the house, two on the ground level, and one above; the upper one was used as a bedroom for the owner and his *capitaz* (a sort of foreman or farm bailiff); below this was a large room used as a general storeroom, but in which beds were made for visitors in wet weather, or in times of danger, otherwise they preferred sleeping outside.

From this room you passed into the general dining and sitting room, furnished with a large rough table, and half a dozen chairs, all more or less damaged, and repaired in the usual native manner with hide. In one of the corners was an old-fashioned corner cupboard, in another several rifles, some with bayonets attached; in a third were tools of various kinds. On the walls were displayed several coloured prints, some framed, and others not; one of these was a portrait of Queen Victoria, issued some years since with the *Illustrated London News*. It was pasted to the wall, and on each side, on a nail, hung two large holster pistols, with their muzzles pointed, Fenian-like, towards her Majesty. In other places hung revolvers, riding-whips, and spurs; but what surprised me most was seeing a handsome gold chronometer, with massive chain, hanging in one place. It was nearly new, and by an eminent London maker; this, our host informed us, had been the property of an English naval officer, who had made a journey out as far as here for the purpose of hunting pumas; but in one of his excursions from this house to a forest at some short distance away, he had received severe wounds from a jaguar which he was hunting. He succeeded in getting back to the house, but died the next day from the injuries he had received. They buried him a few hundred yards from the house, and raised a small cross of wood to mark the spot.

On the outside of the house, but inside of the large trench, was a small hut, one part of which was the kitchen, and in the other lived a man and his wife; the former worked as *peon* and the latter as cook on the *estancia*. Near this hut stood two *ranchos* for the other farm *peones*, and on the outside of all was the before-mentioned deep trench, which could only be crossed by means of a long plank, and which plank was removed at sunset to guard against surprise. On the outside edge of the trench were planted prickly cactus plants, which, with the ditch, proved an almost insuperable barrier to foes.

On the outside of the trench was a fine *potrero* (fenced field) of about six acres of *alfalfa*, similar to English vetches, into which the cattle for ploughing were driven at night, in case of an Indian raid; farther on was a large *corral*, in appearance much like a large, round country pound in an English village: the horses are kept here at night.

In a *galpon* (large shed or barn) the *peones* were at work shelling maize, which had been recently picked.

Everything about the place was in good order, and appeared comfortable, but a stranger could not at first get rid of a feeling of solitude. Mentioning this to Mr. Ball, he replied that he greatly preferred living here, contented as he was, to anything in the same way that could be offered him at home: here he had always plenty to eat and drink, raised on the farm itself; and the sale of cattle and maize, besides paying all working expenses, enabled him to lay by a handsome sum yearly as a provision for old age; as for illness in such a climate, he appeared to laugh at the very idea. The only thing he seemed to regret was, not being nearer to some town, so that he might get his letters and newspapers from home more regularly.

About the middle of the day we were agreeably surprised by the visit of the owner of an *estancia* seven leagues distant. He was a German, and a great friend of our host, being, in fact, his nearest neighbour; finding visitors, he was easily induced to prolong his stay.

Soon after the arrival of this gentleman, M. Moustier, referring to our host's account of the English officer and jaguar, asked if there were still any in the neighbourhood; if so, he should very much enjoy a hunt. Mr. Ball said that he had not seen or heard of a jaguar being in the vicinity for several months, but if we wished to kill one or two pumas, and would remain another day, he would take us to a large *laguna* not far off, where we could find several. We thanked him, and at once accepted his offer.

The same evening and following morning we were busily engaged cleaning and repairing rifles, and getting various things in order for our afternoon's adventure; and about three hours before sunset, accompanied by our host and his German friend, we started for the *laguna*. After a slow ride of four miles we reached the spot mentioned by our host, and found a large pool, about three-quarters of a mile wide, and from one and a half to two miles long; the banks were thickly wooded, with plenty of brushwood between the trees, thus forming a good cover for large game, such as we sought.

After riding some distance, we put the *maneas* on our horses and left them in an open space whilst we walked amongst the trees, where there was little obstruction until we came to a small sandy bay, where we discovered recent tracks of pumas leading to the water's edge. Mr. Ball, upon examining them, said there must be three or more large animals near at hand, which would be sure to return at sunset to drink, and therefore advised our immediately

PUMA FISHING.

seeking hiding-places. After a short search, we found a spot that commanded the little bay, on the sand of which were the tracks. M. Moustier and Mr. Ball climbed up a large tree, and found seats and concealment amongst the branches, whilst the German and myself concealed ourselves amongst the underwood at the foot of the tree. We waited for more than an hour, our conversation carried on in whispers, until the sun had dipped to the horizon. The woods then became all alive with feathered songsters—parrots, cardinales, and many others peculiar to this region. I was intently watching some beautiful humming-birds fluttering around a large wild flower, when the German drew my attention to a movement in the underwood at the head of the bay; in another moment some red deer bounded forth, with every appearance of extreme fright; they then stood a short distance from us, their noses high in the air, eyes strained to the uttermost, and their whole bodies quivering with fear, when, suddenly uttering a peculiar cry, they bounded forward into the water, and began swimming for the opposite shore. At the same moment a puma appeared between the trees, only a few yards from where we were lying, startling us greatly, for we had not heard it approach. Although so close to us, it stopped at the water's edge, and seemed to be meditating following the deer, but at last turned back a few steps, and lay down. Looking into the tree, I saw our host making motions to us to reserve our fire for the present.

After a few minutes' silence, a disturbance amongst the trees at our right hand caused us all to look in that direction; in a few seconds a large male puma, much larger than the first one, appeared, and walked quietly to where the latter was lying, which immediately got up and moved farther, as

if acknowledging the last comer's superiority; two females then followed, one of them with two cubs, who were playing round her legs, but at sight of the water left her, to run forward and roll in it.

Having previously arranged between us that the German and myself were to fire first, the two in the tree reserving their fire to watch the effects of our shots, or in case of danger, I touched my companion, and telling him in a whisper to select the puma which had arrived upon the scene first, aim well and fire, I, having the heavier bore rifle, would take the largest. The German at once fired, killing his on the spot, and I, having aimed well at mine, was about pulling the trigger, when loud cries from my comrades in the tree above, followed by another from the German at my side, startled me, and caused my aim to swerve at the moment of firing, and at the same time a smooth gliding body passed over my back into the brush-wood at my side. This was a snake, as far as we could judge, about seven feet in length, which had been concealed in the thick foliage of the tree above the heads of the two men, and, being frightened by the German's shot, had passed between their bodies on its way to the ground, and then over ours into the thicket. After this little interruption, looking for our prey, we found that the two females had succeeded in regaining the thicket with the two cubs, and the largest puma was following on three legs, one of his fore-legs being broken by my shot.

After re-loading, we all pushed into the wood after them, but the dense underwood prevented our advancing far enough to overtake them, and the fast-failing daylight warned us that we should not have much time to spare after skinning the puma, to return home before dark.

Two of us turned our attention to the horses, whilst the other two skinned the puma, which we found shot through the heart; it proved to be of average size, measuring five feet ten inches from the head to the end of the tail. This animal is the so-called South American lion, but more nearly resembles the panther than the real lion. It has no mane, and no tuft on the end of the tail, nor is the head of the same shape or so massive as that of the African lion; the head of the one killed was very small in proportion to the body and legs, the latter being very large and muscular. The puma is of a fawn colour, and when young is marked with dark lines along the back; these fade as it grows older. In disposition it is ferocious when wild; but it only attacks man when driven to bay, at which time it is very dangerous to approach it. The puma is, however, easily tamed, and becomes quite attached to its keepers. Besides the peccary, capybara, and deer, it destroys sheep, hogs, and cattle. The German informed me that one of these animals killed fifty of his sheep in one night. After skinning the puma, we threw the skin across one of the horses and rode home by starlight.

The next morning we took an early breakfast, and, after heartily thanking our hospitable entertainer, and promising to call on our return, resumed our journey towards the south-west. We continued this course without seeing anything worth noting until mid-day, when we halted for siesta, and to cook some meat we had brought with us. There being a light breeze, our matches were of no use in lighting a fire, so I produced from my saddle-bags two bottles, without which I seldom travel far in South America, one containing a mixture of chlorate of potash and finely-powdered white sugar, and the other a small

quantity of sulphuric acid; placing a little of the powder beneath some dried grass and weeds, I let fall upon it one drop of the acid, when we had a bright flame and good fire in less time than it takes to describe.

After a short siesta we again mounted, but had to alter our course. In fact, after riding some time, I looked at my pocket compass, and was surprised to find we were being taken by our *vaqueano* due south, instead of south-west, our proper direction. Asking him the reason of this, he seemed confused, no doubt wondering how I found out we were wrong, but said it was for the purpose of avoiding some low, marshy ground, that would have interfered with our course. I told him there would be time enough to avoid it when we saw it, and drawing my revolver from my belt, I threatened him that unless he resumed the proper direction, and refrained from all treachery, I would shoot him. We continued travelling until sundown, when we halted, and prepared to rest for the night. Whilst our tricky guide was taking off his *recado*, or native saddle, I took the opportunity to point out and explain the various parts to my friend, who had never before observed one. It must be borne in mind that the saddle forms the seat of a native for nearly the whole of the day, and when on a journey at night invariably his bed, so that, viewed in this light, the many component parts need not excite so much surprise. First of all comes the *coronillo*, a sheepskin, which is put on the horse's back; over this is placed the *jerga primera*, a piece of ordinary carpet, about three-quarters of a yard wide, and from one and a half to two yards long, and folded together once; then another piece of the same kind, but smaller, named *jerga segunda;* then the *corona de vaca* and *corona de zuela*, both of the same size, about a yard square,

the former of untanned cowhide, and the latter of tanned leather, and variously ornamented by being stamped with hot iron stamps of various designs; on the top of all these is placed the *recado* proper, made of wood, covered with leather, and sometimes stuffed with wool or hair. This last article is made to fit the horse's back, and at the same time forms a convenient seat for the rider. To each side of the *recado* are fixed the stirrup leathers; after this comes the *cincha*, which usually consists of two pieces of raw hide, fastened together at one end by a ring, forming a sort of hinge. One of these pieces is thrown over the *recado*, whilst the other goes under the belly. The two loose ends, which have also iron rings attached to them, are brought as close together as possible on the near side of the horse, and then drawn tightly together by the *correon*, a long strip of hide, passed through the two rings and fastened. To the ring in the *cincha*, on the off side of the horse, or that side to the right hand of the rider, is attached another ring, to which one end of the lasso is made fast when in use, or the end of a rope, for drawing a cart, or other purposes. Over the whole is placed a woollen cloth, covered with a sort of fringe, either black or white; this is called the *cojinillo*, and is kept in its place by the *sobre cincha*, a small strap or web, which passes round all. Various kinds of stirrups are in use, some wholly of wood; but when a *gaucho* comes out in his best, he generally sports silver-plated iron ones, weighing at least two pounds each; and I have many times seen them wear silver-plated spurs, whose rowels have been six to eight inches diameter, and made with arms, like a cog-wheel.

After watching our *vaqueano* arrange his *recado* for his night's repose, we sat down to supper, over which we

lingered, talking of home and friends, and wishing we could enjoy home comforts together with the beautiful climate of this country.

By questioning our *vaqueano*, who appeared rather sullen, we learnt that the Indians who made the late raid were of the Calchaqui tribe, living near the border of the province of San Luis, and that their weapons are the lance, the lasso, and the *bolas*. The lance is made of bamboo, twenty to twenty-six feet long, armed at one end with hard wood, finely pointed; the lasso is made of plaited raw hide, about thirty to forty feet long, with a large iron ring at one end; and the *bolas* are three balls of hard wood, or three round, smooth stones, covered with hide, and united together with strips of hide of equal length, about thirty inches. When thrown, one ball is held in the hand, and the other two whirled round several times above the head of the person using them, and then suddenly let go, when they spread open like chain-shot, and upon striking the object aimed at, if a man, encircle him, binding his arms to his sides, but if oxen or horses, get round their legs, and throw them to the ground.

A GAUCHO.

The lasso is used by passing one end through the iron ring, forming a long running noose of about six feet in

CATCHING HORSES WITH THE LASSO.

diameter, which, together with several smaller coils, are held in the right hand, and after being whirled several times above the head, is thrown over the head of the person aimed at, seldom when in a *gaucho's* hand, failing its mark.

The lance is used in the hand, but never thrown, as described by some writers. With regard to the mode of using the lasso, our engraving will give a better idea than pages of description.

After rolling ourselves in our blankets on the ground, we were soon fast asleep, and had been so for some time, when I woke up from a dream, in which I thought our *vaqueano* had transformed himself into a puma, wore spectacles, and sitting upright, was asking which of us he should devour first. I sat up, rubbed my eyes, and looking towards the place where our suspicious guide had laid his *recado*, I could neither see that nor its owner, although the starlight was quite sufficient for that purpose. Turning my eyes to where the horses were, about one hundred yards from us, I thought I perceived one of them loose, and coming in our direction; and as it drew nearer, I saw our *vaqueano* by its side, leading it. Anticipating mischief, I determined to lie quite still, as if asleep, and watch his movements, but at the same time drew my revolver, keeping it in my hand, ready for instant usè. The man and horse approached to within ten yards of where we were lying, when the man left it, and silently drew near M. Moustier, who was nearest him, then bending over him, began unfolding his rug, to get at his revolver and money. I was about to fire, when the sleeper moved, causing the *vaqueano* to get up; but in another instant he had drawn his knife, and was again stooping when I fired. I saw the knife drop from his hand as the ball struck his arm or shoulder, the arm hanging uselessly at

his side. Before I could fire again, M. Moustier sprang up, and the man succeeded, wounded as he was, in gaining his horse and mounting. He then rode up to the other horses, drove off our two spare ones, whose *maneas* he must have previously taken off, and in the darkness was soon beyond our pursuit.

Knowing that it would be fruitless to follow him, we again laid down, and slept until morning, when, after eating a few biscuits, and holding a consultation as to ways and means, we decided that, as we had reached so far, we ought to continue our journey. With the assistance of the map and my pocket-compass, I thought we could find our way to Rio Quarto, and there get another guide.

During this day's ride we passed a large lake and tract of forest, near which we saw some fine specimens of the South American aloe, together with the cactus known as the prickly pear. We ate a large quantity of the fruit of the latter, which I believe to be one of the best of the country. It has a taste very similar to that of a sweet, ripe gooseberry, but is of the size and shape of a pear. It requires great caution in plucking, being covered with what appears to be light-red spots, but which in reality are clusters of very fine and sharp thorns, almost imperceptible, which enter the hand and give great pain, and are, from their small size, very difficult to extract.

When halting for our usual siesta to-day we saw an armadillo, and giving chase, we succeeded in catching hold of its tail as it was entering a hole. Knowing the difficulty of withdrawing it without the loss of its tail, I held it fast whilst my companion dug away the earth with the knife our *vaqueano* dropped in the night after my shot. After a little trouble, we secured and killed our prize, and

cooked it in true native style, as *carne con cuero*—that is, in its skin or shell. It was a perfect luxury, tasting very much like a fat sucking-pig. Not eating the whole, we strapped the remaining portion, in the shell, behind one of our saddles, and again started forward. Towards evening, as we were passing at some distance from a herd of deer, we saw a large eagle swoop down amongst them, and re-ascend, bearing away a young fawn in its talons. Further west, among the Andes, these birds frequently carry off sheep, calves, and even children.

We halted at night in the open pampa, amongst the high grass and wild flowers. The evening being very still, with wind insufficient to move even a blade of grass, we could not but notice the intense silence and repose of the land-scape. Looking round, not a tree was to be seen—nothing but one vast level wild plain, covered with grass and wild flowers.

After supper I looked to the horses; and being now reduced to one horse each, I took the precaution of coupling them together, and then making one end of a *soga* (long line of raw hide) fast round one of their necks, I passed the other end round my arm, as I stretched myself on the ground, so that they could not stray far without waking me. During my sleep, and whilst dreaming I was enjoying a good rest, having completed our journey, I was suddenly roused by a sharp jerk of the *soga* round my arm followed by the neighing of both the horses. Arousing my companion, who was snoring by my side, we both sat up to listen, but for some time could hear nothing. As we were about to lie down again we heard sounds similar to those produced by a moving body of horses, and thinking a *manada* (troop) of wild horses was near us, I asked M.

Moustier to saddle our steeds, so as to be ready to move if necessary, whilst I crept forward in the high grass, to see if there was any other danger. After going some distance, I plainly heard the tramp of horses coming nearer and nearer, but thinking, from the direction of the sounds, they would pass at some distance from us, I was about to retrace my steps, when I heard a movement of something in the grass, and as I turned, my left arm was seized by some animal which I could barely distinguish in the darkness, nor would it leave me until I drew my knife and stabbed it twice. From its howling I knew it to be an Indian dog; the yells were then followed by the voices of men, and I perceived that a troop of Indians had altered their course, and were fast coming in our direction. I at once returned to our horses, and were engaged about the fixings of my saddle, when a loud shout told us we were discovered. Leaving several of our things on the ground, we sprang into our seats, but soon saw the impossibility of escape, for between twenty and thirty savages were moving round us in a circle, at a distance of about fifty yards. We could not see them distinctly, but at one time I fancied I recognised our late *vaqueano*, and made a resolve that, if it came to fighting, he should serve as my first target.

They continued riding round us for several minutes, and I told my companion on no account to fire, unless compelled to do so in self-defence; but while I was speaking one of them rode forward with his lance pointed towards us, and M. Moustier, being the nearest to him, shot him down; he fell from his horse without a groan.

Expecting what was to follow, I called to my companion to dismount immediately, at the same time springing from my own saddle to the ground; but before M. Moustier had

ON THE WATCH.

done the same, the Indians began throwing their *bolas*, and although only starlight, they brought down his horse, which, falling on his leg, held him securely to the ground. He begged me to shoot him, and not leave him to the cruelties of the

savages; but speaking a few words to reassure him, I cut the thongs of the *bolas* which were round the horse's fore-legs, when he stood up, and I handed him to M. Moustier, who was also liberated; then, getting my own horse ranged alongside the other, we placed ourselves between the two. The Indians then dashed forward to us, but our horses being now quieter, we aimed and fired beneath their necks. Two of the Indians fell from their horses, wounded, yelling fearfully; the rest fell back, and commenced throwing their *bolas*. Some of these, first striking the horses on the back and making them nearly unmanageable, flew over to our shoulders, which we afterwards found were quite black from the blows; but whenever an Indian came within sure range we fired, and nearly always killed or wounded him. This continued some time, until a dozen of their number lay on the ground, some dead and others wounded, uttering horrid cries, when they drew off some little distance. After a short consultation, four of their number remained on their horses to guard us, and the rest dismounted to look after those on the ground. Thinking it was now our best chance to clear off, we proceeded to mount; and before the savages could reach us, were in our saddles. In the hurry, my revolver fell from my belt to the ground, and having to dismount to regain it, before I could rise again, I received a thrust from a spear in the calf of my left leg. The pain was intense, but I got into my saddle, and then received another thrust in my right thigh. M. Moustier turned and shot down the Indian who had wounded me, but at the same moment was speared in the neck by another of the party. He called out that he was fainting; but, reminding him of his fate if he should, I induced him to set off as fast as the horses would go. Turning at the same time, I fired my last

shot amongst our three remaining foes, which, although doing no damage, caused them to desist from pursuit. Had they followed us we should have been easily taken, as we had no more cartridges left, and their horses were much better than ours.

After riding some time without slackening speed, the morning dawned, and seeing no signs of the Indians, we determined to stop at the side of a *laguna* which was now in sight, to bind up our wounds, which were painful, and made us very thirsty from loss of blood. After dismounting, I found I was unable to stand, owing to the wound in my leg. The spear, after injuring the muscles, had broken the small bone of the leg, and my riding-boot was filled with blood. M. Moustier's wound in the neck proved a very bad one, the spear having torn away the flesh for a space of two inches, leaving several veins and nerves exposed. I bound up our wounds as well as I could with strips of linen torn from my companion's white shirt, my own being coloured, and we then laid ourselves down to rest.

After a few hours I attempted to re-mount, but was too stiff and weak to do so. My companion then suggested that I should remain where I was, whilst he walked to a small wood at a little distance, to see if he could shoot something in the way of food, as we only had a few biscuits with us. He soon returned with a small red deer, which he had caught by driving it before him into the brushwood, where it became entangled by the horns, when he secured it, made a *soga* fast around its neck, and drove it to our halting-place. It was soon killed and cooked, affording us a first-rate dinner, in the evening a supper, and a breakfast the next morning; the remaining portion being carried with us for use the next day.

We remained at this place all night, but in the morning, knowing the difficulty of reaching Rio Quarto in our present condition, we decided to return in a north-easterly direction, and, if possible, regain the *estancia* of our kind friend, where we could rest for a while; but not knowing which direction we had taken in the darkness, when flying from the Indians, I was not very sanguine of doing so. We travelled as fast as our wounds would allow for three days, but could not find Mr. Ball's *estancia*. On the fourth morning we sighted a *rancho* belonging to a native, and on riding up to it, to inquire our whereabouts, he invited us to dismount, cooked us some mutton, made *matté* (native tea) for us, and after we had remained some little time to rest, mounted his horse to show us the way to a small native village about four leagues distant, named Bellesteros, or Esquina, where there was a station of the Central Argentine Railway. We arrived there a short time before sunset, finding a small village consisting only of mud *ranchos;* but as soon as our good-natured guide mentioned our wounds, and our late encounter with the Indians, every one of the inhabitants seemed to vie one with another in kindness to us, and we were soon installed in one of the best dwellings, with every possible attention. We remained here, very kindly treated, for several days, during which time my wounds healed; but my leg for long afterwards caused me acute pain whenever I attempted to walk.

M. Moustier's neck healed but slowly, and I expect the cure was hindered by his habit of indulging too freely in strong drinks, which so irritated the wound that in a few days he was obliged to leave by train for Rosario, to avail himself of medical advice. I should have accompanied him had my leg been better, but thinking that only rest would

put it right, I decided to remain where I was, agreeing to meet him again in a few weeks at Buenos Ayres; but for several weeks my leg remained in the same state, until a splinter of bone worked its way outwards, when it was well in a few days.

Before leaving the neighbourhood, I paid visits to some of the Scotch settlers I had met in Fraile Muerto, and was most hospitably received, finding great difficulty in leaving them. When I passed through Rosario, on my way to Buenos Ayres, I made inquiry for M. Moustier, but found that after remaining a few days, his wound getting no better he had taken the steamer to Buenos Ayres, to enter the hospital there. On my arrival at Buenos Ayres, and applying at the hospital, I was told that he had been cured, and left for Europe, saying he had seen quite enough of South America.

Thus ended my experience of frontier travelling. Although I have met with many narrow escapes since, in Paraguay and Brazil, I never thought myself in so much danger as when surrounded by the Calchaqui Indians.

IN PAWN IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

A FEW years ago I was one of a party of six white men and two Indians who left Victoria, Vancouver Island, on a little canoe expedition, ostensibly a mere hunting trip, the main object of which with most of us being to search for some mines, which one of our party had heard of from the Indians. One or two had, however, like myself, joined in it more from a love of adventure, and a desire to explore the then entirely unknown interior of the island, and the almost equally unknown shores and creeks which indent the coast, than from any other motive. As the result proved, all of us met with very much more adventure than we had bargained for; and I, for one, went much further afield than I had any intention of doing, and saw quite enough of the matted interior of the colony of Vancouver to suffice me for some time to come.

Our crew consisted of the six white men already mentioned, and two native Indians, to whom the canoe belonged; while the stores, comprising the usual frugal fare of the North-western explorer, was the joint-stock property of us all. The command of the canoe expedition we conferred on an old French Canadian, who had grown grey as a trapper amid the Western wilds, and who knew almost every Indian tribe between York Factory and Fort Victoria.

OLD PARLEYVOO.

He was a grizzled old fellow, dressed, with even an approach to dandyism, from head to foot in a gorgeous beaded suit

of buckskin, while in cold or wet weather a blue cloth *capot* was thrown over the whole. It was his continued boast that no Indian could ever "come it over him;" and he was ever vowing dire vengeance against the whole race should any individual member of it dare to lay finger on him. Yet for all that he was kind-hearted, and was instantly silent, and almost sad, did we but hint at the wrinkled squaw and brood of black-eyed, half-breed children who escorted him down to the beach, as we picked him up at his "ranch," a few miles outside of Victoria. "Old Parleyvoo," as our admiring, yet withal irreverent party styled him, was always, except when his absent squaw and children were in his mind, in splendid spirits, and if not chewing tobacco, of which he consumed immense quantities, was carolling out some cheery *chanson* of the French voyageur.

For the first fortnight we had a fine time of it; everything went as well as could be desired. The weather was magnificent; and as we leisurely paddled or sailed along the shore, we would watch, in dreamy admiration, the calm, silent quiet of the wooded scene; or we would land on some point, and hunt for a day or two, rarely or ever returning at night without a plentiful supply of game. Sometimes we halted at some of the little sleepy Indian villages which dotted the shores at intervals of twenty or thirty miles, or we would be visited by some wandering canoe-man, tempted by curiosity or the hope of a supper. At night we would encamp on some of the many wooded islands, or on the grassy little meadows which skirt some of the many streams, ever and again gurgling over rocks and pebbles to the sea; and then, smoking our pipes full length on the grass, we would talk over the day's work and the morrow's plans, until the darkness coming on, we would roll

ourselves in our blankets and go to sleep. Next morning we were up betimes, and with light hearts went paddling away northward. I think, for my own part, that these were some of the happiest days of my life. The never-varying good humour and honest mirth of my companions, the free, careless life, independent of all the world, and the calm scenery of wooded islands and distant snow-capped mountain-tops seemed to exercise a soothing influence over our spirits, and cause us to look on the whole world with a kindlier feeling than, usually, in the jaundiced atmosphere of busy, moiling, toiling civilisation, it is possible to do. When we did think of cities and men, it was with a kind of pity, as of something we had long ago escaped from, and would never again return to.

The adventures we met with, though perhaps under other circumstances worth recording, were really, however, of such a quiet nature as only to add a zest to our hearty venison or grouse supper, and not calculated to disturb much the even tenor of our way. Now we halted at an Indian village and shared in a great "potlatch" feast; or we would visit some lonely trader or settler; or be disturbed at night by an alarm of marauding Indians, visiting us with evil intent; or for days we would paddle along without meeting a human being. Under the excitement of the adventures attending the latter part of our expedition, these only now linger in our memory as faded reminiscences, which sometimes start up before us, but with that hazy indistinctness which leaves us in doubt whether they are actual things which have happened to us, or are only dreams, or something we have read in a story-book in the days of boyhood.

But our peaceful life was now giving way to more stirring

days. By the beginning of the third week we had got into Johnstone's Strait, a narrow sea-passage which separates Vancouver Island from the mainland of British Columbia, and wild and solitary in the extreme. When we were about the middle of this strait the Indians steered the canoe to the westward, and entered the mouth of a little river which flowed from the interior of the island into the sea at this point. The coast was but roughly surveyed, so that I do not now recollect if any name had been given to it on our charts. The Indians called it the "Hkuskan," which name, with some change to accommodate the jaw-breaking agglomeration of consonants to our tongues, we adopted. At the mouth of the river was a small Indian village of the Nimpkish tribe, who were busily engaged in spearing salmon in the stream. With them we left our fine large canoe, taking in exchange a smaller shallow one, more suited for ascending the rapid river. The canoe was too small for all our party; accordingly the two Indians, with old Parleyvoo and our stores, were placed in the canoe, while the rest of us walked along the wooded banks, meeting the canoe at night, and now and then assisting the canoe party in "poling it" up the more rapid portion of the stream, dragging it over rapids; or when, as not unfrequently happened, waterfalls entirely interrupted our progress, we would assist them in carrying the canoe and the effects overland. The whole journey was most laborious, while to add to our troubles, we had to subsist almost entirely on coffee, bread, and a modicum of bacon. Our beans—that staple food of travellers in this region—had failed us; and as long as we were in the region of the Indians' travel, not a deer could be seen. On the fourth day, however, the stream began to get calmer, and we emerged on a beautiful lake, embosomed

amid the snow-capped mountains around. Up this lake, which was some ten or twelve miles in length, we sailed

MUCHLAHT INDIANS.

in parties of three, until we were all landed at the head of it, at the mouth of another stream flowing through a valley. It was in this district that the two Indians

had once, on a hunting excursion, far beyond the usual haunts of their tribe, found the rich gold-quartz "lead" which we were in search of. We saw it, and to save all further trouble, we may as well mention—what we had all along been suspicious of—that this El Dorado, like many others which the natives will ever now and again lead you to, was nothing more than iron pyrites, and worthless. Gold was afterwards discovered in the colony, but we were not, on this occasion at least, to be the fortunate finders.

After we had roundly abused our Indians for leading us this wild-goose chase, and they had, in consequence, sulked for a day or two, we forgot the whole affair, and set to work to see if we could not find a recompense for our loss and disappointment. This we were not long in finding. The whole valley seemed perfectly alive with deer, and the comparative coolness of this snow-capped region had not driven them to the mountains, where, on the sultrier coast, they usually go in summer to avoid the swarms of mosquitoes; while the stream flowing into the lake and a neighbouring swamp were swarming with beaver. We found abundant employment now. The deer supplied us with food, though their skins were much too bulky to be worth keeping. The beaver, however, though worth nothing like what they once were, were yet worth preserving. In the course of ten days we had killed no less than forty-seven, and though our flour was now exhausted, yet we still continued in the neighbourhood, charmed by the lovely weather and the rare sport of beaver-hunting, alternated with a right royal bear-chase. We had abundance of salt and ammunition, so that we experienced, after a while, no inconvenience from the want of civilised stores. Besides, we were all old travellers, who had long been accustomed to such mishaps. The only one

THE LAKE, LOOKING TOWARDS THE MOUNTAINS.

of the party who was at all inconvenienced was old Parleyvoo, who, conscious that we were far beyond the usual range of the Indians, was never weary of expressing his wishes that we should come across some of them, and, for reasons not stated, inflict dire vengeance on their devoted race. Our life, though without anxiety, was, it must be acknowledged, getting rather monotonous, and after some days I, for my part, began to weary for a change in the life of killing and eating deer, and killing and eating (and dressing the skins of) beaver. Besides, beaver-tail, though perhaps wondrously good as a luxury, becomes somewhat tiresome to masticate for breakfast, dinner, and supper.

It was, I think, on the morning of the eleventh or twelfth day of our life at "Beaver Camp" that I set out alone, for the purpose of seeing if I could find some grouse or other game to vary the monotony of our diet. Hitherto our keenness in the pursuit of beaver had not allowed of our travelling very far afield. The day was cool and pleasant, and mile after mile I almost unconsciously wandered away from camp, until I found myself ascending the snow-capped range which surrounded the lake. The ascent of its wooded slope was easy, and the "squeak! squeak!" of the marmots, which attracted my attention on every side, stimulated me to gain the summit. By noon I had reached the snow, and sat admiring the fair yet solitary scene which lay stretched at my feet. The lake I could see so distinctly that it seemed as if I could reach it almost at a leap, and forgetting the distance I had come, and conscious that my return would be much easier than my upward travel, I wandered along the ridge, attracted by the marmots and the ptarmigan (which for the first time I had seen in the mountains of the island), until the day was declining. Overcome with fatigue,

I sat down in a shady hollow among some rocks to rest. How long I dozed I cannot say ; but when I awoke I was astonished to find that it was six o'clock in the evening, and that a dense fog covered all the fair landscape of a few hours before. I was now thoroughly alarmed, and started to my feet to return to camp ; but after walking a few hundred yards, I found to my horror that I had quite forgotten to note in what direction the camp lay. I had looked upon the familiar lake as such an unfailing guide that, though I had a compass in my pocket, I had entirely omitted to keep the run of my path. Still I was convinced it lay in the direction I was travelling, and I started off with all speed —for the sun, I could see through the fog, was beginning to get low, even in this long July day. I was now again descending the slope of the mountain, and was in high spirits, for I knew I could not be far out if I got to the lake ; but still I could not see the light unwooded space which, even in the fog, could be distinguished from the dark woods around. It was now getting so dark that I feared to stumble over the fallen wood and cliffs, and sat down on the stump of a tree to consider my position. That I was lost I did not like to acknowledge to myself. Again and again I looked at my compass, and again and again was forced to confess that I was perfectly bewildered. I could not, to save the life of me—and my life seemed in a fair way of being lost if I didn't—recollect how the camp lay in reference to the mountain I had ascended in the morning, and was now descending. The lake I could picture, and the camp I could picture, but there were so many mountains all around that the more I thought of it the more confused I became.

Finally, I resolved that I would wait until morning, and

see what the rising of the sun would bring forth. I now began to take an inventory of my resources in the way of housekeeping for a night in the wilds. Blanket I had none; but, luckily, the chilliness of the morning had induced me, contrary to my wont, to put on my many-pocketed coat and waistcoat, and by accident I had put a piece of soap in one pocket while washing at the lake in the morning. I had a big "stick" of tobacco, and my powder-horn was full. Of caps and bullets I had enough, and my revolver was on my hip, more from long usage than from any necessity, and on the other side was my sheath hunting-knife. I had my rifle; so that as far as lethal weapons went, I was tolerably well armed, though I did not like to think that, possibly, by-and-by I might require to use them. Shot after shot I fired, but the only response I got was the mocking echo among the wooded hills, until at last I became aware that I was only wasting my valuable ammunition. It was now getting cold, and the raw fog was penetrating into my very bones. I could also hear the wolves howling in the mountains, so that a fire became doubly necessary. After diligent search in my pocket, I found four fusees. These, instinctively—even against my inclination to harbour such an idea—I felt that I must husband against an evil day. Accordingly, I carefully selected one, and the others I put by, wrapped up in a bit of paper, against contingencies. Plucking some of the dry moss which was all around, I laid it aside; then, gathering some twigs, I prepared a place for them, and striking the fusee, I pushed it into the ball of moss, and twirled it round and round until it burst into flame. Now for sticks; then for more, until I had a good fire built, and it was capable of supporting the very log I was sitting on. This I rolled in, and my anxiety as to a

fire was at an end. I tore the skin off a grouse and roasted it for supper, for I had killed several in the course of the day, and had three of them slung over my back, and then, wearied, I sank to sleep. Before daylight I was awoke by the cold. The fire had burnt out, and the fog had settled down into a drizzling rain, which seemed to wet one without having the courage to do it openly! So it appeared, at least to my fancy, as I tried to blow up the fire afresh. In this I failed; and as I could not afford to waste another fusee, I sat down by the ashes until daylight dawned. It was not my first night in the woods alone, but it was my first under the circumstances I now found myself in. My thoughts were not of the pleasantest, nor my spirits of the highest; still I could not but watch with interest the tall trees lighting up, one after another, as the sun rose, and anxiously I peered through the gloom, hoping to see the lake almost at my feet. But I looked in vain. I was still, however, convinced that it could not be far off. So, as soon as I could see, I started off, breakfastless, in the supposed direction of the lake. The rain had now commenced to fall in a steady pour—a thorough wet summer day—and, what with the rain itself and the wet bushes, I became thoroughly wet to the skin. But other anxieties kept me from being annoyed with such trifles. The ground was wet, and the fallen timber, along which I had often to travel for considerable distances, was slippery to a degree which threatened danger to my limbs, if I fell very much oftener. One awkward fall I had, which did not break my leg, but did the very next worst thing to it—smashed my pocket-compass so irretrievably as to render it useless. I felt very tired, but still I kept on, my mind sometimes outstripping my heels in speed, so that, despite the ground, I would start off running,

expecting that possibly I might have got into some bye-valley off the lake, and would sight its welcome waters every minute.

In the course of the morning I fell across a stream, which immediately revived my spirits, though it flowed in a direction which, in spite of my haziness in reference to the position of the lake, I felt was not in the proper course for me. But streams in mountain regions take so many sudden windings that this did not disquiet me, and I hugged the idea that it must be the stream on which we had killed so many beavers. Inspirited by the thought, I got new life into me, and followed its course as near as I could for some hours. Still it did not flow into the lake. However, I kept on until, to my joy, I saw an opening in the forest, and in a few minutes more I caught a glimpse of a sheet of water. Here at last was the lake; and, expecting every moment to see our camp, I sat down and fired a shot or two to herald my arrival. Alas! I had "hallooed before I was out of the wood," for my disappointment and mortification were extreme when I found, on reaching the shore, that this was not *our* lake! On the contrary, it was a long marsh-bordered one, wending away in among the hills, but in breadth not exceeding one-eighth of a mile. A high ridge hid the view beyond. Mortified beyond measure, I sat down and could have wept for very grief and anger; but anger would do me no good now. Beyond a doubt I had descended the western instead of the eastern slope of the ridge I had ascended the day before, and that between me and my camp there were at least two good days' journey—even if I could be certain of finding it again. This was enough to discourage me.

There was nothing for it now but to make the best of

my way to the sea on the west coast, which I was certain could not be far distant, and there take my chance of falling in with the Indians, and either getting a canoe from them to the saw-mills of Alberni (the only white settlement along the whole extent of that wild, savage coast), or of meeting with some of the trading schooners which, I well knew, visited the Indian villages that for some hundreds of miles dotted the quiet bay and inlets of the western shores. I was the more determined in this because I recollected that an effort to reach the western coast had been talked of before I left our camp, and a faint hope existed that before long my companions might follow me up. Hope or not, I must make an effort. The few hours of daylight which remained I spent in lighting a fire and cooking another of my grouse, and exploring the neighbourhood to determine a route for the morrow. To follow the lake around I was convinced would be useless: to cross it was my only chance. But how? While I was eating my half-raw grouse I thought out the matter. To swim it would be to me the easiest thing in the world; but I had encumbrances. I had my rifle, and to keep it from wet was to me a very important matter—as, indeed, also my revolver, and my powder most of all. I must cross the lake on a raft. But I had no axe wherewith to construct one. There were a number of cedar-trees in the vicinity—the lightest description of all Western woods, and generally used to make rafts. After searching about I found a fallen one broken into several pieces, two of which I thought would suit my purpose, if I could get something with which to bind them together. I had no time to make a rope of cedar bark, as I had seen the Indians do. But just then the problem was solved. As I was sitting on the broken fallen tree a deer

came down to the water to drink. It seemed never to have seen a human being before, and though it started at the sight of me, its curiosity soon regained mastery, and it ambled up to near where I was sitting. To put a ball in behind its shoulders was an easy task. It was accompanied by a fawn, which continually bleated around as I was cutting it up. As the fawn was in the sucking state, it would only starve to death, so, in pity, I put a revolver bullet through it. I felt, as I sat beside the two dead animals, hungry as I was and little inclined for sentiment, almost like a murderer who had come into their quiet domain. But this did not prevent me slicing off the best pieces and cooking a supply on sticks by the fire. In this manner I roasted, against contingencies of no fire and food, enough for about two days. These venison-steaks I secured in my capacious coat-pockets, and having done so I felt *almost happy*, though the thought of the unknown tramp which lay before me somewhat abated my jubilations. The sun now beginning to set on the other side of the ridge, served in place of my compass and directed my way.

To make a cord out of three strips of the raw hide of the deer was not a very difficult matter, and with this I bound together two of the broken pieces of the cedar-tree, making a rude, but—as I knew by experience—serviceable raft for all the duties which would be required of it. Whilst I was looking about for a cedar-tree, out of which to cut a sheet of bark, to form a rough kind of paddle, I noticed here and there that pieces of bark had been cut out of some of the trees which grew near the lake. These I knew well enough to be "Indian sign"—marks that Indians who had been here for some time had cut these

pieces out to make one of the many utensils which the north-west coast Indians form out of the bark of this tree. The "sign" was, however, very old, and gave me no alarm. While thinking over this I began gathering sticks for my watch-fire and moss to make a bed. Close to where I had built my fire was a mossy bank, and this I attacked vigorously. Scarcely had I removed an armful than a sorry sight met my eyes. It was something white, which, even in the fading twilight, I had no difficulty in recognising as a human skeleton. Familiar as I had been with the mournful trappings of death, I started back with a cry of horror as my fingers touched these human remains. The bones were very old, and dropped asunder as they were disturbed. The incident was a melancholy one, and as I lay down by my fire I could not help thinking over the probable tale of the dead man, whose bleached and moss-covered skeleton was lying a few feet from me. Could he have been a lost wanderer like myself, who had died here of hunger, or had he been killed in war? But that could not be, for his head was not severed, and all these tribes take the heads of their slain enemies. Much as I thought about the fate of this man I could make nothing out of it; and I may mention that, though afterwards I made diligent inquiry, I could learn nothing about him. None of the Indians on the opposite coast knew anything of the region I was in, or had ever heard of any one having gone so far into the interior. Possibly he might have been a beaver-trapper on the lake, and had a canoe; but that, with his brush lodge, must have long ago decayed, for the bones were at least thirty or forty years old.

The fire was warm and the mossy couch pleasant, so, in spite of the want of a blanket, wearied as I was with my

eventful day's exertion, I lay down to sleep, perhaps not in the same frame of mind as on the previous night, but yet, so easily do we accommodate ourselves to misfortune, even more hopeful on the whole. In my sleep I dreamt of the dead Indian, who would ever and anon appear to me, like the Ancient Mariner, telling of the accident which had befallen him—how he had broken a limb here, and had been left to die. Then my companions would make their appearance, and once or twice I suddenly awoke, startled by their shouts from amid the gloom of the forest. So life-like were their cries that I could scarcely convince myself, in my half-sleepy state, that I had not really heard them; but I soon dropped asleep again, persuaded that I had taken too heavy a supper, and was troubled with nightmare. Then I dreamt that I was really dead, and that I could hear (ridiculous as was the idea) the Indian women howling over me. These howls increased in intensity until they awoke me, and I started up from among the moss, certain, this time, that they were real. As I jumped up, I could see something moving by the side of my half-burnt-out fire.

Dreaming as I had been for the last hour or two about the dead Indian, I rubbed my eyes once or twice before I could collect my ideas sufficiently to believe that it was not him in reality. Long accustomed to night alarms, I instinctively sprang into the darkness in order to determine who was my visitor. Just then the fire caught some dry twigs, and I could see by the flame that my visitor was a large blackish-grey wolf. I was not much assured by this, and do not know whether, at the time, I would not as soon have welcomed the dead Indian; for though these Western wolves are not so fierce as the "grey beast of Pyrenean

snows," yet, collecting as they do in packs, and impelled by hunger, they are by no means pleasant companions in a lonely forest. I had a shot in my rifle, and could easily have laid it low; but I had no intention of wasting a ball on it. Accordingly I gave a shout that awoke all the sleeping echoes of the forest, and, as the animal bounded off, the yells which answered its howl from all around, answering and calling, made my very blood run cold. I knew they were the gathering cries of the wolves! Instantly I seized some wood and heaped up the fire until its glare illuminated the forest for a hundred yards around. Still I heaped on more and more—for in this I knew was my safety—until the beavers, who had their houses among the reeds by the lake, attracted by the unusual glare which shot over the solitary water, swam up to see what all the stir meant, and I could hear, in the intervals of the unearthly howls which now greeted my ears from far and near, their tails slapping the water in their puzzled astonishment. Attracted by the smell of the venison which I had been roasting the evening before, the wolves had come on a visit to me, and, to my horror, I could hear their howls coming nearer and nearer. However, I knew that, so long as the darkness remained, the glare of the fire would keep them off; but I was afraid that they might attack me in the morning; and, supposing that my raft failed! The thought of having my bones picked by wolves made me shudder; and the sight of a pair of prick ears and a lank body every now and again appearing on the border of the light and darkness in no way added to my comfort. I had little time to think, for I was busily occupied in heaping wood on the fire, and to make assurance doubly sure, I set fire to a heap of fallen trees which lay a little way off, and stood between the two

fires. I had an anxious time of it for the rest of the night, and never, I think, did sorely tried son of earth more gladly welcome the red ball of the sun rising over the trees than I did that morning. The rain of yesterday had entirely disappeared, but a fog arose from the steaming ground, which still acted as a screen to my enemies, who kept up a horrible chorus of howls out in the woods. However, I did not wait to breakfast; but, throwing some lighted brands on the mossy ground in hopes of firing it, I pushed my little raft into the water, and seizing the bark paddle and a pole, which had been prepared the night before, I pushed into the lake. For a time I was afraid it was going to ground on the mud, but after being up to my breast in water, I gave a shout of gladness as the logs floated in deep water, and I found that, though my legs were hanging in the water —for safety, not from necessity—and the raft sank a few inches, it bore my weight well, and that I could make progress—slow, but certain. Just then the sun rose up and the fog cleared away. In a few minutes my fire ashore was surrounded by the pack of wolves, yelling and fighting over the bodies of the deer. They stood for a moment gazing wistfully at me as I moved from the shore, and one or two sprang into the water, and looked as if they would have swum after me. However, to my great relief they turned back, after a few yards, and set to work with the rest of the pack to pick the bones of the fawn and its mother. A gentle breeze which began to ripple the surface of the lake helped my progress, and I rejoiced to see the opposite shore gradually approaching. The lake seemed to be full of trout, which I could see swimming up in the clear water, and, even had I cared to stop to catch them, I had no time or materials for so doing.

In less than an hour the little raft grated on the mud on the opposite shore. Then, with a feeling of joy that paid me for all the terrors of the last few hours, I unfastened my rifle from my shoulders, and throwing it ashore, jumped into the water, and waded to the land, though not without danger of sinking into the ooze. After washing the mud from my boots and trousers, and wringing them out, I climbed the little ridge to look out on the country beyond. As far as the eye could reach there stretched an undulating, but, on the whole, flat, wooded country; while, limiting all, was another such ridge as the one I was standing on. This I fixed as my landmark, towards which, after eating some of my venison-steaks and resting a little, I set off with a cheerful and determined spirit.

That night I slept in the forest, and next day I again trudged along, tearing through bushes and across swampy flats, over streams and over fallen timber, again sinking down at night in the moss, which now served me both for bed and blanket. My fusees were now gone, but after a little practice I succeeded in lighting a fire with my rifle and some damp powder, rolled into what boys call a "fizzing ball," and some moss. On the third day my venison came to a close, and I found no deer in this lower land. They seemed to have all gone to the mountains. Beaver I did see in some of the streams, but I failed to get a shot at them, while grouse I equally failed to find. The woods were, however, full of berries, on which I feasted. They were poor travelling food though, and before I arrived at the ridge I had seen I felt very faint. To add to my discomfort, I found a lake at the base of it. This I had wearily to travel around, as I could find no cedar-trees in the vicinity suitable for a raft. I was, indeed, so weak that

it was with difficulty that I could ford the rapid river flowing in at the head of the lake, and which was so deep that it was only after travelling up some distance that I could wade across up to the arm-pits, with my rifle held over my shoulders. The day was, however, bright and sunny; so I halted, wrung out my clothes, and laid them in the sun to dry, while I bathed in the stream, the icy coldness of which seemed to revive me. Here I found plenty of berries, on which I dined.

I was longing, however, for meat, and thought of the fat deer I had left for the wolves to pick. Just then I heard a familiar sound, and to my astonishment a great fish-eagle caught my eye, perched on the summit of a blasted tree. I caught up my rifle, and in a moment he was lying at my feet, vomiting forth bones of what I knew to be sea-fish. Still I little thought I was so near to the sea, and only looked upon the eagle as material for dinner. I lit a fire, but after experimenting on various pieces, I utterly failed to retain on my stomach a single mouthful of this rather unpalatable fowl. My clothes dry, I set off on my tramp, on the other side of the ridge. The country seemed to slope, but a dense fog to the westward just then limited my view. My former jubilant spirits were abating rapidly, for I expected before this time to have seen the sea, and my poor vegetarian diet was not calculated to revive them. Stolidly I plodded along among the bushes, and over a dismal burnt track, along which a forest fire seemed to have spread some years before, the black stumps standing out weird-like and dismal to the traveller. The forest, however gloomy, is yet always charming, as all Nature is, but these blasted trees looked like something unearthly, and had a most depressing effect in my present condition. Tired, I

sat down to rest among the fir scrub, and oppressed by the heat of the sun and my weary travel, I fell asleep. When I awoke the sun was setting. Conscious of having accomplished but a poor day's work, I started up, and again trudged off, determined to be a few hours nearer the coast before I slept. I had not gone far before I noticed that I was on a sort of trail, or beaten path. This, for the sake of the better travelling it afforded, I took, but without thinking more of it than that it was a deer or elk track. Suddenly, however, I stood as transfixed as ever was Robinson Crusoe when he saw the footprint on the seashore of *his* island, at the distinct impression of a bare human foot in the damp soil! Could I have accidentally gone over my own footsteps? No! I was ragged and torn, but I had still a good pair of boots on my feet, and these were bare footprints; for as I looked around I found them quite abundant. I listened again! What was it I heard? Surely it could not be the echo of children's shouts, and the sullen, dead thud of the breakers on the shore! I instantly took to my heels, so impatient was I, and in a few minutes I was out of the bushes and on a little rising ground. There, almost at my feet, lay stretched the broad Pacific, and not two hundred yards off a little Indian village, smoking in a bay! At the first sight of what I had so long wearied for, I was almost downhearted, and with the revulsion of feeling which followed, would have gladly gone back again into the woods until I could collect myself.

I had lived so long alone that I hesitated to come among my fellow-men, savage though they were. With all the misery and toil I had endured in the woods, I still clung to them as to an old friend to whose faults I had become accustomed, and hesitated to make a change which, while it

MY FIRST SIGHT OF THE VILLAGE.

might be better, might still be worse. I was backward to face the unknown and leave the known, much as I had wearied to get quit of it. I believe that, swayed by these feelings, I would have gone back, for that day at least, out of sight of the Indians, had not some children who were gathering berries at that moment seen me. I would have preferred to have entered the village without their seeing in what direction I had come; but there was nothing for it now; so with a bold front I marched off to the village. There was nobody about when I arrived, so I walked into the main lodge, out of which I saw smoke issuing. An old woman was boiling halibut over a fire in the middle of the floor—or rather throwing hot stones into a wooden box filled with water and so boiling it; and the rest of the inmates, a few old men and women, were sleeping on the benches which served for seats and beds. I had almost walked to the far end of the lodge before I was noticed. When the old woman looked round, I gave her a cheerful "Clawhowya?" (How do you do?) in the Chinook language, or rather trading jargon, and was replied to in the same. She now began talking loudly to the other inmates, who speedily aroused themselves and stared at me, finally giving an amazed "Clawhowya?" The children soon gathered in, and the inmates from the other lodges, and all began whispering and chattering about me. An old man motioned me to a bench, which he spread with a clean bark mat for my accommodation. Some halibut and potatoes—patches of which I had seen growing outside the village—were placed before me, with some teazed-out cedar bark for me to wipe my hands on after I had drunk out of a vessel made of the same universally useful bark. After I had finished, the questioning began. I had my story, of course, ready enough. I was

one of a party of white men—"plenty white men," with lots of *iktas* (property consisting of various odds and ends), and muskets—who were crossing the country from *seyah* (far away), on a *mowitch* (deer) hunting journey, and I had come on in advance to wait until a trader arrived to take us to Victoria. By good luck I named a particular trader whom they told me was daily expected. Could I have a canoe and some good paddlers to take me south to meet the trader, and I should pay them well when I did? At present, not to burden myself, I had nothing with me, but would pay them by papers until he arrived. Then followed a loud consultation in which everybody joined. The result was communicated to me by the only young man I saw, viz.:—That it was *klosh* (good) what I said; that I would get *muckamuck* (food) if I gave a *paper* or order on the trader for it each day; and in the meantime they were all my *tillicums* (friends). The translator of this verdict was about as ill-looking a rascal as I ever remember to have seen in my life. His only dress was a shirt made out of a flour-sack, with "Best Golden Gate Flour" branded on the breast of it, and a scarlet blanket. His long matted locks were fastened up behind in a knot with a wisp of cedar bark, while his face and his low, artificially flattened brow was smeared with blood and grease—a common summer practice among these people (to keep off the mosquitoes they told me). His appearance was not very different from that of his neighbours, except in the malicious cast of his countenance. So like was he to a figure in one of the illustrated editions of the "Pilgrim's Progress," that in my own mind I dubbed him "Apollyon," and by this name he figures in my note-book. Instinctively I disliked the fellow and apprehended trouble from him. He seemed to be a

leading man among them, but yet was not liked; that was apparent. Even the children made faces at him behind his back, and the women showed undisguised hatred of him. By evening, most of the younger women and older children came home laden with berries, and set to work cooking and eating halibut. The old men were, many of them, fine-looking old savages, firm and resolute, though with a something behind those eyes of theirs that could only be expressed by the phrase "a character in ambush;" while some of the young women, if they could only have been induced to be more liberal in the matter of soap and water, would have been far from ill-looking. They had at worst a pleasing, good-humoured expression of countenance, at the sight of which you felt that there was something more in them than the mere selfishness and cruelty of which the countenances of the men struck you as so expressive.

That evening I was occupied chiefly in answering the endless questions they all put to me, Apollyon on this, as on other occasions, taking the lead, though always in a sly, cunning manner, which was infinitely more disgusting than the outspoken selfishness and greed of the old men. I felt surprised at so few people being present—for the village looked a large one—and at all the canoes being drawn inside a kind of stockade. I soon, however, learned the reason. The village on which I had so curiously struck belonged to the Muchlaht tribe, and was on the Tlupana arm of Nootka Sound. Another more southern tribe, the Hashquahts, had for some time been at war with the Muchlahts, and nearly all the able-bodied men of the village were off on a war expedition against them; until they returned I could get no canoe. I felt rather annoyed at the news, but there was nothing for it but to trust to the arrival of the

trader, or that of one of my companions. That night I slept in an empty lodge, Apollyon supplying me with a blanket and a box of matches on my giving him a "paper" for them for about twice their value. In a day or two I had become somewhat at home in the village, and began to know its inhabitants by face, and to be on familiar *clawhowya*-ing terms with them. At first I used to go out for miles around, hoping to shoot a deer, but I soon found that at this season of the year it was a hopeless task. All the deer had taken to the hills, or were frightened out of range by the Indians. Still I sometimes went so far as the ridge, and would there light large smoky fires to attract the attention of my companions, and at night would return to the village.

Day after day passed in this way. The evenings were long, and it was not until dark that I ever cared to turn into my lodge to go to sleep. But sometimes on wet nights I was obliged to keep within doors, and then for the sake of company I would go into one of the large lodges where the Indians lived. Of course I understood little or none of their talk among each other, nor did I seem to have lost much. It seemed principally to consist of boasting of fishing or hunting feats (though I saw none of them who were anything but miserable shots), or of talking of the war and the probable amount of plunder. Sometimes I could see that it consisted in teasing the women, and in expressions and acts which, to our notions, savoured of gross indecency. At other times I could see that it was directed to me, and to my rifle, of which they seemed to have a very high opinion. Of this weapon, I may mention, I never lost sight. It was my best friend, and I was afraid to have it out of my sight. My revolver they did not understand so clearly, but

at the same time had an immense idea of its importance. Our food was chiefly halibut, quantities of which they were

HASHQUAHT' INDIANS.

slicing and drying, giving the filthy little hamlet (if it can be so called) a most abominably fishy odour.

The old men seemed afraid to venture out far to fish, but sat smoking and talking on the cliff in front of the village. The women used to go berry-gathering in the morning, returning at night; while some of the younger ones would go to a considerable distance inland, remaining in rough brush camps for two or three days at a time. I would generally leave early in the morning, and either wander along the shore or go inland a little way—anything to be by myself and out of the fishy village.

There was one headland, about a couple of miles south of the village, where I used frequently to go. Here I could see the line of coast for a long distance, and eagerly I looked out for the trader's schooner, but invariably without success. I had long ago given up all hopes of my companions arriving, and only kept up a semblance of the myth for the sake of having an additional hold on the selfish, suspicious lot among whom I was living.

All this time Apollyon was not idle. Whatever else he failed in, he never omitted before I went to sleep to demand the paper for my board and lodgings. It would have been really amusing (had I not had to pay for it) to see the ingenuity of the rascal in running up a bill. He absolutely charged for my share of the fire, for the use of the lodge, for the water I drunk, and for the potatoes and halibut at a rate which would have been satisfactory to the proprietor of the chief hotel in Victoria. To have disputed one of them would only have been to incur his suspicions. Accordingly I paid them with papers or orders on the traders, all of whom I knew would settle them, getting paid afterwards by me, for to nearly all of them I was personally well known, and forgery was out of the question. It has always been to me a puzzle, the confidence which these

otherwise suspicious rascals put in these "papers," seeming to be perfectly unaware that they may be made valueless, and being, moreover, unable to read them. At all events he took them with the readiness with which the Bank of England would accept the paper of M. de Rothschild. This went on for about a week or eight days. About that time I noticed a change in their behaviour to me, which dated from an incident which I will relate.

Wherever I went, if the journey was not too laborious, I had generally, sooner or later, the company of Apollyon, and, unwelcome though it was, I had to tolerate it. Many is the time I could have knocked the fellow down with great satisfaction to my own outraged dignity, if it had not been that I was unwilling just then to quarrel with him, as I daily expected the return of the war party, from whom I hoped to get a crew to go south, either to the trader, who was at some of the other villages, or, better still, to the Alberni Sawmills.

On one of these unwelcome visits I showed him my broken compass, and expressed great regret that it was now useless, as by it, I told him, I could go almost anywhere. Was it worth much *chickamen?* (money) he asked. I said yes, that some were worth much, and others worth not so much; but that I would give a good deal for a good one. He then ran off to his lodge, and came back to where I was sitting on the beach with something under his blanket. It was a small ship's compass for hanging in the cabin. I examined it with interest, and was about to ask him where he got it, when I noticed something which made me jump as if I had been shot! Apollyon noticed it, I could see, and his wicked little eyes glared fire. Without another word, he seized the compass

and replaced it in his lodge. When he came back I could not resist asking him where he got it; but he only answered in an evasive manner, and moved away, contrary to his usual custom, which was to accompany me, either for his own convenience or for the sake of watching me. *What I had seen on the card of the compass was my own name written in my own handwriting!* And well might I be startled, for accidentally I had stepped into "the room where the skeleton was kept;" and in one minute the savages among whom I was living, and to whom I had entrusted my life, were changed from being merely a dirty, treacherous lot of warriors and fishers into a nest of pirates and murderers with the blood of my friends on their heads! That this was so I had little doubt.

Scarcely a year previously I had made a voyage in a little trading sloop along a great portion of this coast, visiting the Indian villages on the way, my companions buying the furs and other merchandise which the Indians had to dispose of, while I rambled ashore. It was a pleasant trip, and one which to this day I remember with feelings of novelty and pleasure such as linger in my memory regarding few other such expeditions. When I parted from my companions (who were gay young Englishmen of quite a different class from the ordinary professional Indian trader, and who had made this trip more from a love of adventure than from a desire for gain), at their request I took the cover off the compass and wrote my name on the card, so that whenever they looked at it they would have a souvenir of their former *compagnon de voyage.* About seven months before the incidents occurred to which this narrative refers, their vessel was lost sight of, nor could the slightest trace of her hapless crew be found. It was currently believed in

HASHQUAHT.

the colony that she had not been wrecked, but had been taken by the Indians, the crew murdered, and the sloop pillaged and then burnt. Still, though inquiries had been instituted, no evidence could be found to prove or disprove this very current belief, and amid the immediate stir of other events, the sad fate of the unfortunate *Lalla Rookh* died out of recollection, except with those who, like myself, were more immediately interested in the subject.

While rambling about the village for some days past I had seen various implements, which I knew had belonged to some vessel; but they did not strike me as being worthy of much remark, being apparently obtained from some wreck or other. All, however, now came forcibly to my mind. They were doubtless only further remains, with the compass, of the sloop in which I had made my early voyage; and I shuddered to think that, perhaps, before long I should share the fate of my unfortunate companions, whose murdered bodies were no doubt buried somewhere amid the rank nettles and bush close by! I was so confounded and horror-struck at the discovery I had made that I sat where I was, motionless and wrapped in thought, for hours. When I arose to return to the village it was getting dusk. It was not, however, so dark but I could perceive that during the last few hours all the articles of wreck which I had formerly noticed had been *carefully put out of sight*. From that time I also noticed a marked difference in the way I was treated. The old men with whom I was on terms of friendship were now reserved in their manner to me, and frequently when I addressed them they would wrap their blankets about them and go off, muttering something in their own language which I could not understand; and I often saw them talking in

little groups, and nodding in my direction. Even the women, by whom I was always treated with the greatest civility and even kindness, began to look askance at me. I soon saw that some person had been working against me; who it was I had little doubt. Apollyon, who had formerly been abjectly civil to me—even cringing—now began to change his tone. Though he never neglected to ask every evening for the "paper" of my day's expenses, yet, instead of hinting that it was due, he would almost insolently ask it; and he would even go so far as to wave me to go to him, instead of coming to me. This I was determined to put a stop to as soon as possible, at whatever risk. I knew well enough that Apollyon was not respected in the village, only feared, and that if once he was thoroughly put down, nobody would stand much up for him. It was not long before I had an opportunity.

It was, I think, about the close of the third day after I had aroused their suspicions in reference to the compass, that I was sitting on a rock at the end of the village peering wistfully out towards the sea. Gradually most of the old men of the village approached to where I was, and sat down beside me, their noses inside their blankets, Indian fashion. Apollyon also came, and after muttering something to the old men, with an air of assumed contempt, he began talking to me, while I could see the old men were listening with some anxiety, one translating to another, and making hurried comments under their breath. Were my papers good? he asked me. When did I think my *tillicums* (friends) would come *enite illihee* (across the country)? Was I a *tyhee* (chief) among the white people? and so on. All his questions I answered in a calm tone of voice, marking, however, the growing impudence of the scoundrel;

ONE OF MY NEW FRIENDS.

and at the same time that he had a two-edged knife concealed in the hair behind his ear. This is a favourite place with these Indians, and only used when they wish to conceal the fact of their having such a weapon about them. Accordingly I kept my eye on it. Little by little he grew more insulting and I more contemptuous of him, until finally he told me he didn't believe that I was a chief at all, or that my papers were worth anything! Of course I could have shot him on the spot, but that I did not wish to do, as it would have involved me in trouble, and possibly have cost me my life. So I restrained myself until he pushed up against me. The moment was now come. Quick as lightning, before he could act, I seized him by the nape of the neck with my right hand, at the same time catching hold of the knife and throwing it from me with the other. I then with my heavily-booted foot comfortably kicked him in front of the lodges. These Indians are strong of grip, and once let them get hold of you, nothing can make them let go. This I avoided, and from the place where I had seized him I could move him as I would. My blood was fairly up, and a grim sarcastic humour seized me as I kicked him backwards and forwards for two or three minutes—calling on the women, who were returning from berry-gathering, and the old men, whom I could see were quietly rejoicing over it, that here was the man who did not think a white chief's papers good, and then delivering him a kick and giving his neck a squeeze which made him howl with pain. I fancy such an exhibition had never before met the astonished gaze of the Muchlahts. By this time I had kicked him back to where I had left my rifle. This I took hold of and let him go. He did not wait to expostulate, but bolted with a speed of which I had not

thought him capable. I then walked back to where the crowd were talking together. I could see that my spirited action had materially raised me in their eyes; though they were so utterly astonished at this British method of going to work to punish an enemy that they did not know well what to make of it. They seemed perfectly amazed. If I had shot him, they would have understood that; but only subjecting him to the fearful indignity I had was beyond the range of their philosophy. They, however, in an almost awe-struck manner, invited me to partake of some berries; and one of the women whispered to me not to sleep in my own lodge that night. Though I knew that the safest place in an Indian village, if you expect trouble, is the main lodge, on account of the Indians not liking to fight where there are women and children, some of whom might get struck, and, besides, one's friends will be more apt to give the alarm than if you were alone, still it would not do thus to confess my fear, and I affected to laugh it off, and, as usual, went to the vacant lodge appropriated to me—even earlier than usual. I determined, however, not to sleep, for though I had seen nothing of Apollyon, I knew he might be close at hand for all that I knew, and no doubt was meditating mischief to me.

I must have been about two hours lying wrapped in my blanket, when I was alarmed by a trampling among the bushes behind the lodge, but I soon lay down again, convinced that it was only some of the Indians moving about. In this belief I was confirmed, for just then a boy ran in and told me that he was certain the trading schooner was in sight. At this glad news I started and ran out to the cliff. But I was disappointed; the object which the boy had seen looming in the darkness was shown by the moon,

which was then rising, to be nothing but a low fleecy cloud, and I again returned to my "bed," downhearted with hope deferred. Just as I was approaching it a blanketed figure ran round the end of the house and disappeared suddenly in the woods. Almost simultaneously I recollected that I had left my rifle in the lodge. Rushing in, my worst fears were verified—the rifle was gone! I stood transfixed. Misfortunes never come singly. Here, in addition to having had an open rupture with the worst scoundrel in the village, I had lost my best means of defence, and the very instrument on which I was depending in a plan of escape which was now revolving in my mind. I could have sworn that the figure I saw at the lodge was Apollyon, but the long blanket gives in the darkness such a general resemblance to all these coast Indians, that I could not be sure of identifying the wearer, even if that had served me much. When I came into the main lodge, one of the first whom I saw was Apollyon, sitting busily taking his supper. He was apparently very elated at something, and quite different from what a kicked man would appear on the day of his disgrace. To me he was perfectly civil, but in his eyes shone malice and revenge. Though no longer insolent, there was an elation in his manner which made me uneasy, and confirmed me in my belief that it was he who, perhaps bound on an attempt to murder me, had stolen my rifle. It was in vain that I complained to the people. They only *etsia'ed* in surprise. Nobody was more astonished apparently than Apollyon, though his countenance showed that he thought himself suspected. I was too wearied to argue the point, so I rolled myself in my blanket, after he had gone to his own lodge, and slept among the rest of the people in the most crowded compartment I could find in the great house.

My confidence had quite deserted me with the loss of my trusty friend the rifle, which, during the last week or more I had looked upon as especially my safeguard against all enemies. I had still my revolver, but somehow I did not feel the same confidence in it. Next morning I renewed my inquiries, but all to no avail. House after house was visited, but I returned bootless and rifleless. Sick at heart, I wandered out of the village, along the path by which I had approached it, heartily vexed that ever my feet had been directed there, having now lost all hope of my companions arriving. If they had left, they must have reached the coast elsewhere, but the probabilities were that they had given me up as lost. My only hope was now in the trader. If I had had my rifle, I might have escaped south along the coast, or bribed the Indians with it, when they returned from the war-party, to take me south in one of their canoes. But this hope was gone, and poor as I had been, I was now poorer than ever, for my most valuable possession was gone. I had walked and walked on until I was out of sight of the village, and had reached the little river flowing into the lake, where I had bathed just before I had sighted the village ten days before, when I sat down on the banks to think out my condition and my plans. While there were many things in that village which disgusted me, there was one person in whom I was rather interested, and regarding whom my curiosity for some time past had been excited. She was a girl, perhaps thirteen or fourteen years of age, so fair that there could be no doubt that she was a half-breed, though how she could have come here, so far from any white settlement, puzzled me. In appearance she was very different from the other women. Always clean and tidy, her personal appearance was somewhat striking, independently

LOUISA, THE HALF-CASTE.

of her handsome face and figure. She, of course, went about her work just like the other Indian women, and for some time past I had seen little of her, as she was off berry-gathering. I had several times spoken to her, for I was curious to learn her history, but it was always in the village that I met her, and she was frightened lest we should be observed, for after glancing hurriedly about, she would run away. I asked Apollyon several times about her, but he only evaded my questions, though neither he nor others ever affected to deny that she was a half-caste. Why this was I could not imagine, unless indeed Apollyon was troubled with jealousy, for he was a bachelor.

Thinking on such subjects, I was startled by being tapped on the shoulder, and turning round I was astonished to find the half-breed girl standing behind me. She had (as I afterwards found) followed me from the village. I was just then so disgusted with the whole of the Indian race, that I gave her an angry look, and paid no further attention to her. At this she came in front of me, and to my astonishment addressed me in English. "Do you not know me?" she said; "do you not remember Louisa?" and she called my attention to a gaudy tinsel necklace, which for the first time I noticed round the girl's neck. "Don't you know this, Mr. B——?"

I looked at the girl again. Surely I recognised her features! In a moment the recollection of who she was sprang to my memory. She was the daughter of a trader with whom I had stayed for some time nearly two years before. Of course I knew her well, and it was I who had given her this very necklace. On my expressing surprise at seeing her in such a place, she told me that her father had been dead some time—a fact I already knew—and

that her mother, who belonged to this tribe, had accordingly returned thither with her little girl, as the only home she knew. Her grandfather was the chief of the tribe, but was now off on the war expedition. When she last saw me I was close shaved, and it was not until some time after I had been in the village that she remembered me in the big-bearded fellow I then was, and then only by a ring of peculiar manufacture I wore on my finger, but which, when a little girl, she had often tried to get off, but failed, as it was very tight. She had told this to Apollyon, but he compelled her to promise not to tell me that she knew me, in case I should get any information from her. Apollyon, she informed me, was only a common man, but was very rich (*i.e.*, he had many blankets, the Coast Indians' standard of wealth), and had remained behind when the war party left, to take care of the village. He was a *cultus elitee* (worthless fellow) she said, "with no heart!" She had followed me out to warn me that most likely he would attempt to murder me. She was certain he had my rifle, for only that morning she heard him talking to one of the old men about it, but it was hidden somewhere.

"I suppose he is angry with me because I know that your people killed the white men in the *Lalla Rookh?*" I said in a careless tone.

Instantly the girl put her hand upon her mouth, Indian fashion, and appeared inclined to say no more. "Blood is stronger than water," and she feared for her grandfather; but I calmed her fears, and after some trouble learned the particulars, which I had already guessed. They had murdered the men, cut their bodies open, and thrown them into the sea. The half-savage girl told me the most minute particulars with the most nonchalant air, apparently, from long

familiarity, more horrified at the fear of a gunboat coming round to punish them than at the shocking deeds of blood she was recounting. They had intended to kill me, she further informed me, but could not make up their minds; one party was for it, another against it. One party thought that it might not be prudent to kill me, in case my companions should arrive, or that my "papers" on the trader would not be good in that case; while the opposition was decidedly of opinion that dead men tell no tales, and that if they wished to avoid all risk of my telling about the murder of the *Lalla Rookh* people, the best thing to be done would be to take off my head. In the meantime, with selfishness and fear warring against each other, they could not agree on a line of action. However, since my quarrel with Apollyon I ran a fair chance of being killed without the question coming again before the public tribunal. That I knew well; and altogether I was in a worse position than ever I had found myself before. What I might have done under the circumstances I do not know, for when I walked back to the village in the evening I found all in an uproar. The war party had returned victorious, with many heads and prisoners. Human heads, dripping with blood, were stuck on poles in front of the lodges, and the whole tribe were busying themselves for the horrible orgies of a war dance. To make things worse, they had found some whisky in the village they had attacked, and all were half drunk, and of course exceedingly dangerous. Under these circumstances, I thought it more prudent to keep out of the way. In the confusion of the moment, I procured unseen a piece of cooked halibut from my half-breed friend, and took myself off to the woods with my blanket, and slept there.

I had apparently touched the *white* and the *woman's*

side of the girl's heart, for sympathy and gratitude are not in the Indian; and selfish from misfortune and example, I lay thinking how I could utilise this trait in the girl. It was a cold-blooded calculation, but when one's life is in the scale it is no time to stand aghast about what is to be thrown into the scale against it—so long as no law of honour is broken. Should I persuade her to attempt to recover my rifle? or should I lie concealed in the woods, engaging her to bring me food, and advise me of the arrival of the trader? Should I take (steal it was not, considering what I had suffered and lost) a canoe, and persuade her to escape during the night with me to paddle it? One and all of my plans fell through as impracticable, or too utterly dishonourable to stake even against my life, and as evening came on I returned again to the village, determined to make a final effort to get off.

The hideously-grinning heads were still on the poles, and the shuddering captives, with their closely-cropped hair, sat in the corner; but everybody was sober—painfully sober—after their last night's debauch. The old chief received me with a grave courtesy, very different from Apollyon's sneaking manner. As for Apollyon himself, he had sunk from being a petty tyrant to a very humble position indeed, and seemed to shun rather than court notice. Though the men I was now among were a cruel bloodthirsty lot, yet with them I felt more at my ease than with the others. They had a manliness about them which inspired some confidence. Without aid from me, they seemed to know perfectly well how affairs stood. No doubt the gossips had not been idle, and I could see they were swayed by the same motives as had influenced the others. I found out also that they had only attacked a few outlying camps, and were daily in

IN THE VILLAGE.

expectation of being attacked by the whole force of the Hashquahts in return. That afternoon most of the women and children were dispatched several miles into the interior, berry-gathering, so as to be out of the way, and among them the half-breed girl, so that with her vanished any hope I had entertained of escape by her aid. I could see that they were determined that I should not go until the trader arrived, and that if the village was attacked they considered that it might be useful to have me in it; *in fact, I was lying in pawn*, just as assuredly as ever Titmarsh "lay in Lille," but under much graver circumstances.

That night I slept in the chief's lodge, but I could see that I was being closely watched. It was in vain that I asked for a canoe and men; offering to pay at the highest rate when I got to Alberni. They could not leave—they were afraid to pass near the Hashquaht village; they would be sure to meet their foes, and be all killed. In a word, there was nothing but to stay where I was until the trader came. That I was determined not to do, but to escape south to some other village, where I might be more successful. An irresistible longing seized me to be off and clear of the wretched village where my life had been one of such anxiety; and the very thought of the possibility of it filled me with veritable "pleasures of hope." I felt in better spirits than for days past; I even showed exhilaration, which, luckily for me, put them somewhat off their guard. On the second night in the chief's house I could not sleep much, the place was close, and my mind was too busy; so at dawn I shook myself out of my blanket and slipped out. Almost mechanically I took the beach *south* of the village, and wandered along a few hundred yards, until in a sandy cove I sat down on a fallen tree. Nobody seemed to be

about. Should I take advantage of the next few hours, and put some miles between me and the village, trusting to berries, shellfish, and my revolver for food? If I met any Indians, I could not be much worse than I was. At worst, *I could only die;* and when a man philosophically thinks thus, it is wonderful what courage and determination he gets. It is this miserable petty fear of death that makes cowards of us all. In another moment I should have been off, when ping! a bullet whistled past my ear, and struck the beach a few feet ahead of me. A glance at the place showed that it had been aimed at me. In a moment I was in the wood. I knew the sharp, clear sound of that shot; I had fired too often with that rifle not to know it. I had only gone a few paces in the direction from which the sound came, before I saw a blanketed figure skulking off amid the bushes. In a few bounds I was on him, but quicker than me he plumped down on the ground, covering something with the ample folds of his scarlet blanket. It was Apollyon, and that he was attempting to shoot me with my own rifle I had no need to be told. In another moment my hand was on my revolver, and had it not been that I was afraid to alarm the village, a bullet would have been through his flattened skull. I had other designs, however. "*Ikta mika mamook?*" (what are you doing?) I indignantly asked.

He gave one of his demoniacal sniggers as he looked up into my face and replied, "*Cultus!*" (nothing in particular!)

"*Cultus!*" and I looked at him, and he at me. I saw that he had a knife under his blanket. I could also see the butt of my rifle peeping out. The sight roused my fury, and rushing on him, I gave him a tremendous blow in the eye with my fist, sending him "heels over head;"

not, however, before he had given me a slight cut in the arm while aiming at my heart.

He was up immediately, but I had already seized the rifle, and as he rushed on me, knife in hand, I caught him a blow with the butt-end which laid him senscless among the bushes. I gave a hurried look at him. His forehead was deeply cut and swollen, and though he still breathed, I had little doubt but that I had finished his earthly career. In another minute I was off, bounding through the woods in a southerly direction, keeping a short distance from the beach.

It was yet early dawn, and flushed with the morning's work, I ran through the thick fir woods with a speed of which I did not think myself capable. Stumbling over fallen logs and scrambling through bushes, I still kept on, in the open places running as hard as I could, until, when breathless I made a halt, I must have been several miles from the Indian village. Though a moment's consideration would have shown me that I was perfectly safe from pursuit in this direction, I was so much afraid of losing my dear freedom, that I only stopped to reload from the powder-flask and bullets which I had never parted with. Again I fled southward, at a distance probably of more than a mile from the shore, until in the course of the afternoon I halted by the banks of a little stream to pick some salmon berries, for I was getting hungry. In the hurried course of my flight I had determined to sleep during the day, not only for safety, but for warmth, and travel by the moonlight nights which were now in all their beauty. Accordingly I lay down to sleep among the bushes, and wearied, I slept soundly for some hours. It was not yet dark, but the moon was beginning to appear over the trees. I tarried to eat a few more berries, and while lingering I heard a rustling among

the bushes. So fearful was I lest I should again be pursued that I endeavoured to hide myself—but too late. It was the half-breed girl who had startled me. She had a basket of berries on her back, and was apparently returning home to some camp in the neighbourhood. I knew that in prospect of the village being attacked, most of the younger women had been sent off, as being too valuable chattels to be exposed to the risk of capture by the invader; so that after the first startle at her unexpected appearance, I was not surprised to see her, even so far from home. Before I had time to speak to her another woman pushed through among the bushes, also with a large basket of berries on her back. Both stood motionless in an attitude of astonishment, with their fingers on their lips, uncertain in the fading twilight whether to believe me real or only a *tomanwo*—(a ghost). Assured by the flesh-and-blood laughter with which I greeted the astonished damsels, they inquired where I had come from. Scotchman fashion, I answered by asking another, where they came from and who were with them. They were camped in a little brush hut, a few minutes' walk (*tenass oikyout*) from here, they said, and there was nobody with them except a few women and children, "all of them," they assured me, as with womanly acuteness they saw the half-dubious expression of my face, "*koneway tillicum copa mika*" (all of them friends to you).

I told them in return as much as I cared to tell, concealing the fact of the little manslaughtering transaction of the morning in which I had been engaged, though it was no use denying that I had escaped from the village and was going southward. To all of this they only answered "*Etsina!*"*

* A common form of exclamation when astonished.

and begged of me to come to their camp and get some *muckamuck* (food) before going further.

Under even hungrier circumstances I might have declined this, but the kindly expression of the poor girl's face showed me that I had nothing to fear. But as I came near enough to their camp to see the smoke curling up, they beckoned me to stop. Could it be that these two damsels were afraid of their reputation being lost by escorting a young man through the forest? Oh no! it was a much more prosaic reason. They were afraid of the other women telling, when they went back to the village, that they had more than the rest helped me to escape; and so they charged me to come to the camp some time after them, just as if I had stumbled over it myself. I obeyed them exactly, and though again much astonishment greeted my sudden appearance, by no one was it more shown in reality than it was feigned by my two friends of not many minutes before. Nothing could have shown me Indian guile and duplicity more thoroughly than this, and it in no way made me more comfortable while they pressed food on me. I was always afraid of some treachery, even while feeling ashamed of having so low an opinion of those who so kindly treated one whom they well knew would probably never repay them. Out from under the eye of their lords of creation, these Indian women were quite a different set of people from what they had hitherto appeared to me. Jocular, kind, and really unselfish now that they saw my need, they pressed on me roasted trout (which they had caught with grasshoppers in a little lake not far off) berries, and *gamass.** I saw them several times looking at my rifle, but though all of them

* The bulbs of the *Gamassia esculentea* (Lindl.), a blue lily.

knew well the circumstances of my losing it, none of them ever referred to it. The fire was burning brightly, and my rifle was lying over my knee with the brass-hilted butt fully exposed to the light. I noticed a glance exchanged between two or three of them, and finally one of them remarked, "Oh! you must have killed a deer coming along; look at the blood on your musket."

I immediately examined it, and reddened to find what I had not hitherto noticed, blood and hair on the brass butt. I evaded the remark, and the women were for the moment attracted by something else. Then the half-breed girl whispered into my ear, "*Mika mem-aloose yaka?*" (did you kill him?) I saw that my secret was out, and that it was as well to tell the whole story with an air of gaiety, and this I did. I found that I might have told it at first, for from the moment they saw the rifle again in my possession, and me in flight, they had taken it for granted.

I was horror-stricken to see how calmly these women, who had been so kind to me, heard the story of the death of one whom they had known from childhood. Actually they did not seem to care anything about the matter, unless it was that they looked upon me with more respect than before. One woman whispered to another something about "buying his body"—a common custom among these people—but she was silenced for her greed. No feeling of sympathy for the dead man, or horror at me his slayer, seemed to enter their souls, hardened by long familiarity with such incidents as these. After this I felt uneasy in their company, for if they looked so lightly on the death of a fellow-tribesman, how much less might they not consider the murder of me, a stranger, a white man, and the slayer of one of their own people!

The full-risen moon, which now shed its light over the forest, afforded me an excuse for being off. They would have pressed food on me had I chosen to diminish their not over-large supply; but I contented myself by learning from them the distance to the Hashquaht village, and, as near as they could, the lay of the intervening coast. It was "not far," they assured me. There were, however, no villages between, and the village I had escaped from was the most southerly one of the Muchlahts.

As I had intended to keep the sea on my right hand as a guide, I started off in its direction, among the now ghost-like trees, and once more was a *free* man; though the forest did seem silent and lonely after the gossiping, chatting group I had left. Lightly equipped, and now more familiar with the difficulties of woodland travel, I passed quickly along in a south-west direction. In my excited condition every trifle alarmed me. The hooting of an owl made me start as if a war-cry had rung in my ears, and even the rustling among the branches of some animal aroused from its slumber by the crackling of the branches, gave my nerves a greater shock than in ordinary circumstances the growl of a bear at my side would have caused. After I had travelled an hour or so I sat down to rest, and was so wearied that, quite against my will, I dropped asleep. How long I slept I do not know, but when I woke up I was so provoked at having lost valuable time that I started up at once, and hurried off with greater speed than ever.

Hurrying on at this pace I soon reached the sea, and cautiously I approached from the shelter of the forest to survey the line of coast. I had come out near a little headland, up which I climbed so as to get a more commanding view. It was a calm, warm summer night, and as I reviewed

the eventful day that it had closed, I congratulated myself that I had done a good day's work for myself. Still the thought of having the blood of a man—even of my would-be murderer—on my head disturbed my satisfaction, and I got more nervous than ever. South of the little cove at my feet stretched a long sandy beach, which, now that the tide was ebbing, afforded much better transit than the forest. I was thinking that I might safely attempt it, when I happened to look northward. Surely I had seen that reef of rock and that cliff before! I could have dropped down with the shock I received, when I realised the stunning fact that I was not more than a mile from the village I had left in the morning! Either during the time I had slept, or before, I had mistaken my path and had gone in the opposite direction to the one I ought to have taken.

I was so alarmed at thus losing my day's labour, that I would again have started off into the woods to make good my loss, had not, just at that moment, a something struck my ear which made me insensibly sink down among the thick fir-scrub. Plash! plash! There was no mistaking it. It was the steady dip of paddles into the still, glassy water. So still was it that I could even hear the water rippling against the bows of the canoes. Cautiously peering out, I saw a sight which made the perspiration stand on my brow in cold drops. There they were! I could count them—one, two, three, five—nine large war-canoes, full of men, paddling into the little bay I was overlooking. What could they be about? And for a time my curiosity overcame my alarm. One after another they ground the canoes gently on the sandy beach, and by the light of the moon I could see their hideous black war-paint as they whispered together on the beach. Finally, one man drew out a knife, and made a

plan of something on the smooth wet sand of the beach. Then, as he pointed here and there, he repeated certain names, which made me prick my ears; for, from the time I had stayed in the Muchlaht village, I knew these to be the names of the heads of families in each lodge. The scoundrel seems to know the village well. He is drawing a rude plan of it, and telling who lives in this house and who in that. It is a plan of attack, and the aboriginal Von Moltke is giving directions to his men, each to creep up under darkness, and while the village is fired, to secure their victims. It is the Hashquaht warriors on their way to the Muchlaht village, to revenge the slaughter of their fishing village, and I breathed more easily.

The moon was now getting down, and daylight was yet some hours distant. They were waiting for that, and soon again they were into their canoes, and creeping cautiously along the coast under the shadow of the rocks and trees. I was inclined to watch until I saw the village in a flame, and heard the yells of the night attack; but all curiosity had left me. I was fleeing for my life. The beach afforded me excellent travel, and along it I ran for an hour, and then rested; but so unnerved was I with the many startling events of the day, that I would run for some time, and then "bolt" into the woods; then, peeping out once more to see that no one was watching me, would again run for half an hour, and so on. I need not have troubled myself, for all who were likely to have any interest in me were too busy with other matters.

When the sun got up I was more calm, for I then saw that I had got several miles from the Muchlaht village, and if what the Indian women told me was true, I might reach the Hashquaht village next morning. I was foolish not to

have known better how vague were the *siyahs* (far) and *wakesiyahs* (near) of the Indians; but in my circumstances, and with my hopeful disposition, I was only too eager to snatch at any crumbs of comfort. Invigorated by the presence of daylight, I walked until about noon, though latterly I had frequently to take to the woods, and climb some difficult rocks which interrupted my progress. At last, when the heat of the sun became somewhat oppressive, I crept into the woods again, and fell asleep.

When it was about time to set off again on my travels, I was so weary that, after making a vain attempt to find something to eat, I collected a quantity of moss, and lay down among some bushes to sleep. I was afraid to light a fire, though the warmth of it would have been grateful, for the night was chilly. What with this and what with hunger, I was up betimes in the morning, and searching the rocks for shell-fish. In vain I searched: the rocks were bare. At last, when I was giving up the search in despair, to my immense joy I lighted on quite a patch of "abelones," or ear-shells.*

I do not suppose gourmands will sympathise with me, when I tell them that I never remember in my life being more overjoyed at anything. Careless of Indians, and of anybody and everything else, I kindled a fire on the beach, and commenced cooking my shell-fish, Indian fashion. After my fire had burnt for some time, I scattered the embers, and laid the mollusks all carefully on the now hot stones beneath. I then ran down to the sea, and filling my hat full of water, threw it on the heap; instantly covering

* *Haliotis nutkaensis* of zoologists, I suppose; but I was too hungry to attend to their identification.

them with my coat, the steam was kept in, and in a moment or two they were beautifully cooked, and ready to eat. Perhaps, in a less enthusiastic mood I should have been ready to confess that they were tough as leather, and not cooked after the most approved method of the rough-and-ready cuisine I had adopted; but this I know, though I had before eaten dinners at Verrey's and the Trois Frères, and since then at the Maison Dorée, Delmonico's, and many other places famous in the annals of cookery, that never, either before or since, recalling that savage meal in the light of those hungry days, do I remember eating anything half so good, or enjoying it a thousandth part as well. I have been longer without food than the six-and-thirty hours I had then been, but by too long a fast one's appetite gets weakened; I was just then hungry enough to eat with an appetite, and didn't I eat! I even went down to see if I could find any more; but there was no such luck in store for me. So, invigorated and in better spirits, I trudged along. It never rains but it pours. That night I slept in the woods again, after feasting royally on huckleberries,* and next morning—a bright, warm, sunshiny morning—I trudged on quite lively. I knew that I was now out of all danger from pursuit by the Muchlahts, and as for any other Indians, I was tolerably safe. Besides, was I not in search of Indians? and something I must risk. So I determined to travel during the cooler part of the day, and sleep among the moss at night.

That morning I had not gone far before I was stopped by a deep narrow inlet of the sea. Whilst chafing under the annoyance of the long détour I should have, I sighted

* *Vaccinum ovalifolium.*

an Indian mat tent on the other side, and almost simultaneously a canoe lying on the shore along which I had come. It was a small canoe, and while I was examining it an old man and a woman came out of the woods. They had been looking at their martin-traps and their salmon-weir on a little creek, while the old woman was laden with the roots of the bracken,* which are boiled and eaten by these people. They were both very old, and almost stupid. Stolid and impassionable, they expressed no surprise at seeing me, after the first hasty start. They could speak no Chinook; but I had picked up enough of their language to make myself understood. They were Hashquahts, they told me; but seemed to have little or no curiosity as to where I had come from. The old woman, as they ferried me across, sitting on my haunches in their wet, leaky canoe, merely asked if I had come *wiklyt unnahhissiyah* (far). "Yes, I had come *siyah*," I replied; "*siyah*"—and I waved my hand in a vague manner to the north—"and was going to see my friends at the Hashquahts' great house." She merely nodded her head, and said nothing more. At their lodge the old couple feasted me with boiled salmon-trout and gamass, until I cried enough, and were made passing glad when I presented them with my silk necktie and a couple of charges of powder and ball. It was in vain, however, that I could persuade them to escort me, in their canoe, on my way a little. They only cried, "*Wiklyt! wiklyt!*" (No! no!) and made a pantomimic gesture as of heads cutting off. As for the Hashquaht village, they could only tell me it was *siyah, siyah* (far, far), and moved away into their lodge to doze away the noon, as I again took up my weary travel.

* *Pteris aquilina.*

Once more my luck took a turn, and for the worse. The coast was now high and rocky, and I had to go far back into the woods in order to get room to walk. My stomach was full, fuller than it had been for some time past; but I was depressed by the information just given me. I hoped, however, to find more Indians soon, and in the meantime stumbled along over logs, and through bush and stream and swamp. A brown bear that day crossed my track; but I had neither time nor inclination to pursue him as he ran to the mountains, which now dipped down close to the water's edge. I saw no berries of any kind, and that night slept very cold and supperless among some rocks, after lighting a fire with my pistol and some powder, for my matches were now all gone.

Next day I again made the shore, a long sandy beach, which presented no hope of anything edible, so that I had again to take to the woods to seek for berries, but in vain. Walking in the woods was so laborious that I took to the shore again, and travelled along all night.

Next morning I was seized with what I had 'all along dreaded, a severe attack of dysentery, caused by my irregular diet, and bad food when I had any. How the next two days passed I scarcely know; in my note-book there is hardly an entry to guide me. All I remember is dragging my steps wearily along, almost caring for nothing, and all but in despair, sometimes sitting to rest and dozing away into an uneasy dream-disturbed sleep for a few minutes or a few hours, and then hastily starting up again and making for the south. The only thing I had not lost interest for was food; but sharp as I looked out for berries I could find none. The "common objects of the sea-shore," unless they were edible, scarcely attracted my atten-

tion. Even a dead seal, of an unknown species, was mainly interesting to me because it promised something to eat. It was putrid, however, and in vain I attempted to swallow a bit of the raw, stinking flesh; my dry, swollen throat refused to pass it. With an eye to the delectation of Dr. Gray of the British Museum, I endeavoured to carry the skull with me; but what in ordinary times would have been to me only a feather-weight, now appeared like a load of lead, and sadly I was forced to disburden myself of it. Once I shot at a grouse drumming in the bush, but to my chagrin missed it. I had better luck with a guillemot swimming in the sea; but after trying to swim out after it, I found myself too weak, and had to abandon it, and again drag my weary way along. Then, to add to my troubles, it began to rain. To avoid the shower I crept into the thick umbrageous woods again. Three weeks before, I was creeping through this great forest, but with very different feelings. Then I wearied for an Indian village; now, a hunted man, I was escaping from one and trying to reach another. But yet I would not have gone back again, even if I had had the opportunity; and I determined, if I could not procure a canoe at the Hashquahts' village, after satisfying my hunger, to take the first opportunity of continuing my travel south.

But was I ever going to reach the village? was the fatal question which presented itself to me, as I felt the dead and yet gnawing pangs of hunger, and the terrible weakness superinduced by this famine. My clothes were in rags, and my boots were beginning to give way. When they were gone, what was to become of me? Thus I sat cogitating until it was quite dark; but I had formed my plans. I determined to start off for a ridge of rocks I saw about two miles ahead

of me, and there remain if I could find shell-fish and one of the numerous streams of water on this coast, until some passing canoe should take me off. I felt half ashamed of coming to such a dastardly resolution after all my fine plans. I was in such a faint condition that, for some time, I seemed to have lost all my old prompt resolution, and sat wavering which course I should adopt. I even went so far as to draw out one of the few half-dollars I happened to have in my pocket, and commenced to toss for it, after the manner of a street-boy, "tails" for rocks, "eagle" for village. "Tails" won, and now that the rain was over I crept out of my leafy shelter, and again trudged along the shore in the darkness. The rest had—as I have more than once noticed under similar circumstances—instead of recruiting my energies, rather added to my weakness, and for the first hour my walk in and out of the woods, and among the rocks, was wearisome in the extreme. Perfectly exhausted, I sat down to rest, half uncertain whether I should ever reach the long looked-for rocks, sorry compromise as they were with the village. As usual, I nodded in my weariness and fell asleep in half-stolen "forty winks" at intervals. I have often tried, but unsuccessfully, to recollect when it was that I first saw what I am about to describe. It must have been when I woke up from a longer doze than usual, that I rubbed my sleepy eyes, as *I saw a light not half a mile ahead, seemingly as if among the trees!* Could it be the rising moon? No! it could not be that, for the moon was beginning to appear at intervals among the clouds. It was a camp-fire of Indians, no doubt. Though a few minutes ago I would have hailed any human being with joy who could have given me food, yet now that my wish seemed about to be gratified, the suspicion and caution misfortune

had taught me, made me backward in approaching the fire too abruptly. It was so dark that I knew well that the party round the fire, whoever they were, could not see me before I saw them, so that I need not conceal myself for some time yet. Instinctively I looked to my pistol, and re-capped my rifle, so as to be prepared for any emergency. New spirit was now in me, and my whole frame, shaken as was my nervous system, was in a tremor of excitement. Cautiously I crept along under the shadow of the trees which grew almost down to the water's edge, until I was within a couple of hundred yards. I now silently stepped into the forest, and from behind a tree watched the object of my interest. That it was a camp-fire there was no doubt, but there were no canoes, that I could see, drawn up on the beach. Surely it could not be white men! I could scarcely keep from indulging in a gladsome shout at the thought, but I restrained my joy, for I had not been the vagabond so long without learning "not to halloo until out of the wood."

It was certainly a white man's fire; an Indian would never make such a pile. He is too lazy and too wise to build one so large that he can't get near it for the heat. On tiptoe I approached, halting instantly and grasping my rifle firmer if a twig crackled under my feet. I was now close on them, and I could see, by the light of the fire, a Rembrandt-like group—one, two, three, four, and surely there was a fifth—tending the side of a deer roasting by the fire. They were talking loudly, as free men talk in No Man's Land, or in any man's, friend or foeman. I approached still nearer, until from behind a fir-tree I could hear their voices, and even scan their faces as the lights and shadows of the flame played on them. They spoke, and spoke with

English tongues. I listened eagerly, and I could catch a word or two. Good heavens! could it be? I heard my own name, and I thought that the voice ought to be familiar to me. *It was old Parleyvoo, I was certain*—a name so long since I had heard it that it seemed ages. Again I listened; it was Jim B—— who was talking, and he was swearing at Parleyvoo for burning the deer. There was no mistaking the oath of British Commerce, as employed to bless the eyes of the son of France! Were my eyes not deceiving me? Were my ears not mocking me? Was my brain not reeling in my misery? Was it not all a dream? It seemed years since I had eaten my haliotis mollusks—ages since I killed Apollyon—and the time when I hunted beaver by the lake looked like some remote period you read of in ancient history.

I would have rushed forward, but something seemed to restrain me. Western men are apt, when alarmed in the woods at night, to shoot *by way of precaution*, and I knew my quondam companions were not less ready with the rifle than their neighbours. I do not know well *what* tempted me, but I remember having a notion that I would go back into the woods and sleep until daylight. Again I listened; it was Sol H—— who was talking, apparently pretty freely swearing at old Parleyvoo, who was taking, I could hear, too sanguine a view of some subject (Sol was always the desponding man of our party).

"Oh, dry up, man! What's the good of talkin' that way? Poor B——'s a gone coon long ago! You and he were always about a pair on ye in the bush together—better at eatin' than trackin'. I never did, for all the talk about him, think much o' B—— as a bushman; never a think!"

Then ensued more talk. I could see them, and hear

their voices as if wrangling, but I could make no sense out of it. My eyes began to swim—I gave a low scream—I grasped the tree—I could see men starting up from the fire in alarm—all swimming before my eyes for a second, and then all was blank. When I next came to consciousness I was lying alongside the fire, with old Parleyvoo and Sol dashing water in my face, while attending on me with a steaming pannikin of tea.

In the intervals of eating and tea-drinking (unsweetened as it was, it was nectar to me) they told their story and I told mine. Next day after my loss, on my not returning to camp, they had gone out in the rain, and fired shots far and near; but hearing none in response, they presumed that I had either been killed over a precipice, or made for the opposite coast. They waited at the camp two days longer, still signalling, but, as the reader knows, without avail. They then put their furs and all their heavier baggage in the canoe, which they dispatched to Victoria with the Indians, while, lightly equipped, they took their journey for the west coast. Like me, they had struck the narrow lake, but lower down, and had unluckily taken the route by its southern end. They soon got entangled among mountains, range after range, and though they found deer and elk there in abundance, they were almost in despair of ever reaching the coast. Finally, only two days before I had fallen in with them so opportunely, they reached the sea here, and had been waiting to recruit themselves before going in search of an Indian village. They had no idea where they were, and thought of going north; luckily, I could warn them against *that*. When I told them of my troubles, of course old Parleyvoo insisted on our tramping up to the village to exterminate the Indians, root and branch; but

ATTACK OF THE HASHQUAHTS.

finding that there was not the slightest likelihood of our going, he was hard to pacify. He had more than once to be reminded that Mrs. P. might not exactly be pleased if she knew that her kinsfolk had been so badly used, before, in Western parlance, he would "dry up." Then, after I had eaten and drunk to repletion, they threw more wood on the fire, and each man opened his pack; out of one was produced my spare breeches, out of another a shirt, and so on, until once more I was decently clad, in place of the rags I had been gradually getting reduced to. It was almost morning before I could get to sleep, and even then I sometimes woke in fright at the blue-blanketed, mummy-like figures around me, thinking that I was again in the hated Muchlaht village.

We stayed here all the next day, and then by easy marches we moved on. In two days we came to the Hashquaht village, where we were received with all the respect usually accorded to six armed white men. Here we also found the trader I had so long waited for, who supplied all our wants, and enjoyed a good laugh at the way I had been treated. He was astonished that I had ever expected anything else. He was not so pleased, however, when he heard of Apollyon's death; that sinister savage being deeply in his debt. Indeed, the only thing which really damped my happiness now was the thought of having this rascal's blood on my head. But I need not have been so anxious; I did not appreciate the thickness of Indian skulls so accurately as I had reason to do shortly afterwards.

In a day or two the Hashquahts returned victorious, with many heads and much plunder, from the different Muchlaht villages which they had attacked. They had.

however, only one prisoner, and that was my quondam friend Apollyon, whom I had no difficulty in recognising, in spite of the contused forehead and beautiful black eye! He seemed almost stupefied at seeing me; but immediately, true to his instincts now that he was in trouble, began to "toady" me, and had even the impudence to wish me to buy him. Old Parleyvoo thought it rather a good idea, if we could get him cheap, and "work him too, like sin!" but we determined to leave him in durance vile to repent of his iniquities. I had no curiosity to inquire how he had recovered, or whether it was owing to the slight obfuscation of his limited intellect caused by my rifle-butt, or to his innate cowardice, that he had been captured. At all events he had my "papers" safe enough, and even presented them to the trader. By my order he got paid for a fair share, while the trader was directed to whom to pay the rest, and particularly to the women who had so kindly assisted me in my flight. The trader himself soon ran north to the Muchlahts' village, rightly calculating that they would be short of powder. I told him that if he could persuade the half-breed girl to come to Victoria, I might, I thought, interest some charitable people on her behalf. He was, however, drowned on his return voyage, and as I shortly afterwards left that part of the country, I could never learn what became of her. We soon obtained a large canoe, and with comparatively few adventures, in the course of a few days reached the regions of civilisation.

Several years have now elapsed since then, and amid the rush of civilised life, the salient features of the adventures I have attempted as faithfully as possible to record pass before me as shadowy phantasms. Sometimes the whole looks like a dream, and the beaver-camp, the wolves

at the lake, the Indian village, the escape, and the happy meeting seem to me unreal, and like something I have read in a story-book years ago. But when I turn up my sleeve, and look at a scar on my arm, I am again reminded how veritably, once in my life, I was "in pawn in an Indian village."

A DOCTOR'S LIFE AMONG THE NORTH-AMERICAN INDIANS.

By R. Brown, Ph.D., etc.

I have read in missionary journals, and in some others by no means missionary, that if a traveller wants to get along swimmingly with any savage people among whom he may be sojourning he should by all means possess a knowledge of medicine, and, by inference, be practising his medical skill on the unfortunate barbarians who are for the time being his neighbours. So often do I hear this that if there be any truth in what everybody—or nearly everybody—says, then this, among other plausible statements, must be received into the same category as Holy Writ. I don't want to be disagreeably sceptical about any such theories, only, unfortunately, my experience, so far as it goes, is rather in opposition to this. I don't for a moment doubt that a good knowledge of surgery may help a traveller. Surgery the most obtuse savage can see the effects of, and know that in this department he can do little or nothing. I will even allow that after one has been long resident among any body of people his knowledge of pure medicine may gain him their confidence. But at first he had better keep clear of all amateur doctoring, especially if there happen to be a native medical faculty; and this there

almost invariably is, whether under the name of obi-men, medicine-men, or sleight-of-hand necromancers generally. A savage views the new-comer with all the dogged, sullen suspicion of an ignorant people living to and by themselves. His medical knowledge is looked upon with equal scepticism, and even contempt. Accordingly, when a savage is sick he will apply to the recognised medicine-man, or sorcerer, of his tribe or village, to cure him by the incantations and foolery which time-honoured tradition has hallowed in his eyes. If he ever applies to the pale-faced traveller, it will only be when he is just at his last gasp, and has lost belief in his own medicine-man; the chances then are that the best physicians in Europe could not save him. Now it is that the cunning medicine-man—whose professional jealousy has been roused—will work on the credulous, suspicious minds of the natives, and as he has the infinite advantage over you in knowing the language and the modes of thought of his countrymen, the chances are that he will do you mischief. Here's the way he reasons:—"The patient was on a fair way to recover, he had caught the little devil that caused the sickness; once he had slipped through his fingers, but he would have been sure to have caught him the second time, and either burnt or drowned him, when this ignorant fellow, whom nobody knows anything about, and may be, for all we know, anxious to introduce small-pox or other terrible white men's disease among our people, interferes, and you see the result." The argument is not very convincing to the reader, but it is decidedly so to the relatives of the dead man who is lying in that savage village; and it is just about that time that the unfortunate philanthropist wishes that he had never known anything about purgative pills, or the virtue of any drug whatever.

If he only gets kicked out of the village, or sent on his way with anything but blessings on his head, he may think himself remarkably well out of the scrape. I very nearly came to a much worse fate.

I was very young when I first set out on my travels, and endowed with very much more philanthropy towards my savage brother than I happen to possess just now. I had not only been instructed in the principles of medicine, but had received a regular medical education, so that I could not be called a mere dabbler in physic. I was, of course, continually told that comforting doctrine about the value of my knowledge among the savages whom I proposed visiting, and frequently burned to put my ideas into practice on the "vile body" of any sick savage whom I could come across. It was not long before I was gratified. My first experimental journey was made with a well-known Indian trader, and not long after bidding farewell to civilisation we halted at an Indian village, belonging to the tribe into which my friend the trader had married. His wife, who was with us, made herself very useful at times. The chief was lying ill, and the medicine-men were in full force around him, but hitherto had made no impression on him. In my zeal, I hinted that I thought I could do something for him; and as he informed me that he failed to get any sleep for days past, I considered that I could not do better than give him a dose of opium, which I did. And, amid the scowls of the medicine-men, and the plaudits of the chief's family, the old man was sleeping when we left the village. I was decidedly proud of my first success, but my triumph was short lived. The trader, after making a journey a few days further on, began to return over the same road again. All went well with us, for my friend was a power in that part of the country, until

THE CHIEF, IN FULL WAR DRESS.

we were about half a day's journey from the village where I had preformed my medical exploit. We were congratulating ourselves on the prospect of the good reception we should receive from the chief whom we hoped was now on his legs again, when we were startled by the sight of an Indian sitting by the side of the path. He was the trader's brother-in-law, and a particular friend of his. We, of course, saluted him in a cheerful manner, not unmixed with the patronising air that philanthropists will assume to their less benevolent fellow-men. But our *clawhowya* was returned with a desponding air, and a peculiar glance towards us, and more particularly in my direction, from under his heavy eyebrows. The "Hemlock Fir"—for such, being translated, was the cognomen of our friend—was the bearer of evil tidings, most depressing news indeed. It was a long time before he came out with it, but at last it did come in all its disagreeable features. The chief, my patient, was dead. In fact, he had got into a sound sleep—so sound, indeed, that he never awoke again. The tribe was very excited on the subject, and declared—of course *he* did not believe it—that between us we had conspired to kill the chief. This suspicion was all the worse because, just two days before, a rival trader had been at the village, and, on mentioning their suspicions to him, he assured them that nothing was more likely, because he knew that my companion was one of the greatest rascals living, and he never doubted but that his friend, the doctor, was, if possible, a worse rogue! The result was that when he quietly left the village they were drowning their griefs in the flowing bowl, and were in such a state of excitement with loyal grief and whisky that he feared they might, in the excitement of the moment, kill us. For me, the messenger was good enough to remark, he

didn't care much, as he had not known me long, and I had never given him much; of course, for the trader, he had feelings of regard, for, independently of the trifle of being his brother-in-law, he had in times gone by received from him many blue blankets, and, what was much more to the purpose, expected to receive many more in the future. Accordingly, he had dropped ahead to warn him, for, unfortunately, under the influence of the whisky, they had recollected that W——, my companion, had once, some years before, had a quarrel with the chief, and they were certain that he had only used me as an instrument to carry out the destruction of his enemy, and might, therefore, be inclined to include him in the intended revenge. Therefore the Indian thought that, if we set much value on our lives just now, we had better keep out of the way for a while, and, at all events on this particular journey, avoid the irate village by working round in another direction. That was all the news; he had nothing more to say. Tableau: Indian smoking a pipe, with his blanket around him, perfectly unconcerned; trader leaning against a tree, with a number of his Indian attendants squatted on the ground open-mouthed; while the writer of these words was sitting whittling a stick, in that condition of mind sufficiently expressed by the word "cheap!" It was a study for a painter. For five minutes nobody spoke.

At last the trader, after breaking the silence with an initiatory oath, eased his pent-up feelings by a perfect flood of curses on me, on the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, on the Apothecaries' Company, and the whole medical faculty, Indians, and Indian chiefs, past, present, and to come. I really do not remember any man, even in Western America, swearing so heartily and so long at one stretch.

After having exhausted himself, he felt better able to discuss matters. There was too little ground, knowing as he did the Indian character, to doubt that the forebodings of the messenger had good foundation, and that if we expected to retain our heads long on our shoulders, we had better take the back track as soon as possible. It was in vain I told him that the dose was not sufficient to poison a child, that the chief had died of natural decay or of disease—in fact, that it was all nonsense. He never, for his own part, doubted the fact, he assured me; but what did that matter, so long as the apostrophised Indians believed the opposite? Such was the unavoidable state of the case, and meanwhile I was admonished to put as long a distance as I could between the Indians and my scalp—and that we did, though the back trail was a bad one. In fact, we had only begun to enjoy the good travel, when perforce we had to retrace our weary steps.

That night we travelled long after sundown; we were too weary (or afraid was it?) to light a fire for the night, and by dawn were off again. Indeed, it was not until we thought that we were safely out of the Indians' reach, that we made a lengthened halt to recruit ourselves and animals. On the second day at this halt, the trader's wife, whom he had left behind in the village until his return, overtook us. She had got a hint from her brother, and had stolen off in the night, travelling continuously, afraid that her husband might never be able to see that village again, and, in fact, give her the slip. She was in exceedingly bad humour, and commenced abusing us, from a safe distance, in some outlandish language. Then the cursory remarks were taken up by her husband, who I could see was in no way very pleased at the unexpected appearance of his

brevet-spouse, until enough of anathemas were vented on my head to suffice for one lifetime. I got quite accustomed to them in course of time, and treated a string of oaths five minutes long as quite a playful discharge of animal spirits on the part of my friends in the fur-trading line. The end of it was that my companion's ire was somewhat abated, for so fast had we travelled that when we arrived at the nearest trading-post we discovered that we were rather early in the market, and the "good thing" which he made of his packs of furs somewhat consoled him for his misfortune. It was, however, a long time before he dared again visit the fatal Indian village—indeed, not until I was out of the country. Then, with the coolest impudence, he informed me he wriggled out of the scrape by laying the whole blame of the chief's death on my head, and informing the whole village in council assembled that, so far from being incapable of poisoning the chief, his private opinion was that if it had not been for his good example, and the want of drugs, I would have devoted to death the whole Indian nation!

That I never tried medical practice among the Indians again, it will hardly be necessary to tell the reader. Some years afterwards, I was, however—from no choice of mine, but rather from necessity—forced to put my surgical skill to the test, and this time with rather better success. I was then roaming about among the wild primeval forests on the northern shores of the Pacific. One day I started off from an Indian village on the coast for a few days' journey into the interior. My only companion was a native boy, who carried my blanket, hatchet, tin kettle, and one or two odds and ends of food and impedimenta—articles which diminish in a wonderfully exact ratio to the time one has been "out" in those regions. Ours were accordingly not very burden-

INDIAN OF THE OREGON TERRITORY.

some, and lightly equipped, we dived deeper and deeper into the dense forest, until from a hill we lost sight of the sea. Then I knew well that I was safe of my Indian boy's companionship, for an Indian of the North Pacific seaboard is always in a state of mortal terror the moment he is out of sight of his native village; unless he happens to be a hunter —which few in these fish-eating tribes are—he quite loses his head in any difficulty, when the roar of the familiar ocean is not sounding in his ears. These dark forest glades are peopled with all sorts of hobgoblins, ever seeking the destruction of the luckless Indian; and hence if he does venture so far in, it is only under the ægis of the white man, whose wondrous many-shooting instruments act as a sure protection. Even then you can never be certain that you will not wake up in the morning to find yourself alone in these wilds, with your baggage, such as it is, all around you —the porters having, in terror of the unknown dangers into which you are leading, taken the opportunity to return under cover of darkness. Once out of sight of the sea, you are tolerably safe; for they are poor trailers, and in the forest, instead of "guiding" the white man, according to the familiar story-book fashion, they dog his heels, and take shelter in his rear on the first sign of alarm, and consequently are of but little use either as guides or protectors. These North-western forests, unlike the Eastern American woods, are difficult to travel in. The interspaces between the tall fir-trees are nearly everywhere densely packed with a luxuriant undergrowth of shrubbery, which at first appears totally impenetrable, and which renders the traveller's progress slow and difficult. The streams, which everywhere meander through this dense forest, are often perfectly arched over with the branches of the shrubs which grow on their

banks ; and the first intimation which is sometimes given of their presence is the sudden disappearance of the pedestrian; for the weary explorer, as he pushes at random into what he only considers a mass of bushes, plumps up to the middle, if not over his head, into an icy-cold stream. The route is interrupted by deep, rocky ravines, over which a fallen tree affords a natural bridge, which, though it is sufficiently secure, and strong enough to bear a considerable weight, is nevertheless very often difficult to cross with safety owing to its shape. In wet weather, when it has become soaked with rain, it is apt to be very slippery and dangerous.

It was at one of these ravines that our troubles began. We had travelled one day, camping out at night, and had set off early next morning to search the neighbouring mountain for deer. Some rain had fallen in the night, and the unbarked log over which we were crossing a "gulch" was very slippery. I passed in safety ; but when half-way across, the youth overbalanced himself, and with a yell he went headlong into the ravine. I was watching his progress from the opposite side, but was so stunned by the accident that it was some minutes before I had presence of mind enough to stir. The gulch ended at a little river, up which we had paddled a few miles the first day, until it became too full of rapids, and then we had left the canoe and taken to land. I found that the only way to reach the Indian (who, by his lusty yells, I knew was far from being killed, as I had at first imagined) was to go down to the river, and then crawl up the gulch. This I did, and a toilsome task it was. The boy seemed rather astonished to see me, for when I disappeared he had doubtless imagined that, Indian fashion, I had intended

deserting him, and either clearing off entirely or "buying his body" from his relatives. His fall had been broken by some branches, and though badly bruised, it appeared that he had sustained very few serious external injuries, and he complained of none internally. On trying to walk, however, he found he could not stand—his thigh had been fractured. Here was a mess! indeed, at that moment I was unphilanthropic enough to wish that, for the benefit of himself and whoever else it might concern, he had been killed outright. However, for the time being I was the individual, next to himself, chiefly concerned, and had to set myself to devise means to save the lad's life, Indian though he was. On examining the fracture I was glad to find that the bone was only fractured, the ends not being displaced. This was one blessing.

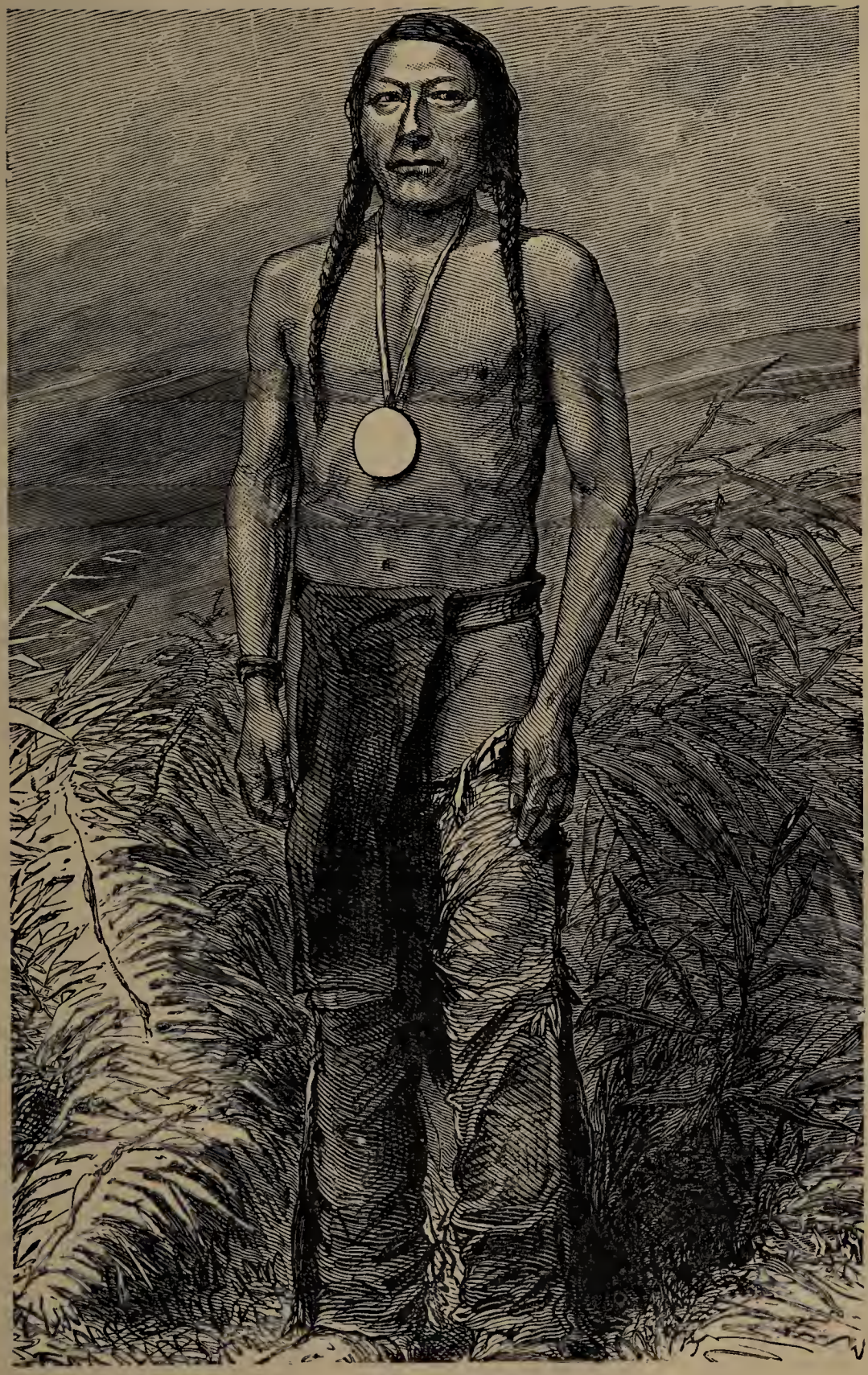
The next thing to be done was to remove him from the place where he was lying, among dead trees and water. My first attempt was naturally to get him out by the way I had got into the gully; but this was found impracticable. Twice I attempted to climb the bank with him clinging round my neck, but twice I failed; on one of the trials, indeed, tumbling backwards into the river—luckily very shallow, though it might have been better for my skin if it had been a little deeper. My next move was to carry the youngster to the edge of the ravine, near to the place where he fell; then to go up and fasten the end of the rope which bound my blanket (and which, for the sake of convenience for other purposes, was long) to a tree, then to let myself down into the hollow, and with the "slack" of the rope bind the boy securely in our two blankets, and finally to reascend, and hoist him up. This, I soon found, was rather an awkward task, and the boy's head and body bumped

against the trees and rocky sides of the gulch rather more frequently than was agreeable to him. Finally, however, I was successful in getting him up all right, minus a few more bruises and his fractured limb. Once again on level ground, my troubles commenced anew. Though the limb was swelling, a renewed examination satisfied me that the bones were not yet displaced; but bandaged they must be somehow. Bandages or splints of any sort I had none. What was to be done? was the question I set myself to think out, as I sat down to rest by the side of my wounded henchman.

His clothing consisted only of a very dirty cotton shirt and a blanket pinned around him. I considered, after due deliberation, that for a young man in his walk of life a shirt was quite a superfluous article of clothing. Accordingly, without consulting him, though indeed not without some mild remonstrances on his part, the shirt was drawn off him and cut up into bandages; the needle and thread, without which no traveller of any experience ever goes far, supplying the necessary materials for sewing them into one long strip of cotton. Now for splints. The nearest approach to pasteboard which I could see was the smooth, tough bark of the cedar (*Thuja gigantea*), which peels off in thin sheets, and out of which the Indians make all sorts of domestic wares. A short search supplied me with the bark in abundance, and now commenced my improvised surgery. The moss, with which the trees were hoary, supplied padding in room of cotton; over this were wrapped the sheets of cedar bark, and then around all was tightly bound the shirt-made bandage, the whole being well drenched with cold water on the outside, while the surgeon and his patient refreshed themselves with a pull at some stronger waters for the

comfort of their inner man. How was he now to be got home? Could he not be made to *hop* all the way? These boys were able to hop a long time in play, and though it might be rather more troublesome to hop a couple of days through a primeval forest, it might only serve the little rascal right. The idea was so comical that I burst out in a loud laugh at the thought, much to the wonder of the boy, who was groaning close by; but I was afraid it wouldn't work, so it had to be dismissed. To float him down the river was out of the question, for besides the fact of there being nothing at hand to float him on, there was not water enough here to float a cat. Equally impracticable was the notion of remaining where I was until he either got well or died, for at the earliest six weeks was *rather* too long to remain out there, dependent on what I might kill. The youth decidedly objected to being left alone until I returned for help; in fact, he commenced crying piteously whenever I mentioned the subject. He was afraid of being eaten by wolves—of a hundred things that I had never imagined. The truth was, he was afraid that I was going to leave him to himself. I couldn't stand the boy crying. If there had been only three of us, we could easily have made a stretcher with two poles and a blanket, but there were only two; so there was nothing for it but to adopt the primitive plan of carrying him on my back. This was not very easy, for the only way I could do it was to allow him to hang on to my shoulders or around my neck in the best way he could; for I could not catch hold of his legs with my hands, on account of his broken limb. This settled, the next question was our route. Though we had been out more than a day from the Indian village, I knew that we were not distant a day's travel, for since leaving the canoe we had not gone in anything like a

straight line, indeed, had pretty well kept by the banks of the river, which I remembered had described a great curve, so that the place where the canoe had been left could be pretty nearly reached if we cut straight across country until we again struck the river. And so we took up our weary march—the boy on my back, on his back my blanket, and on the top of all our tin "billy," which kept up a cheery rattle as we jogged along. If travel under ordinary circumstances through these forests is not good, certainly with a sick Indian on your back it becomes well-nigh intolerable. The day was hot even under the shadow of those great trees, and the boy smelt decidedly of stale fish—what else could he smell of, who had lived on dried salmon all his life? From long experience of his race, I concluded that he was even less cleanly than was at first sight palpable to the eye unassisted by a minute search. I didn't much like the way the noble savage scratched his matted locks when we stopped, as we did every ten minutes or so, to rest. Not unfrequently, also, I tripped up over fallen trees; and once, fording a mountain stream, I slipped overhead in a nasty deep hole, to the vast astonishment of the youth, who was quietly slipping down river when I caught hold of him by the scalp-lock. I was, however, a man doing a duty, and doggedly went about my task, not caring very much, indeed, *who* was drowned. I was in no temper to bother myself about trifles, and it would have been dangerous to have approached me just then in reference to many sublunary matters. The youth, who was now and then relapsing into a talkative mood, was peremptorily silenced under pain of being set down. I shouldn't wonder—though I was too busy to keep a note of it—if I indulged in strong language when I took a



MY PATIENT'S FATHER.

particularly bad header into some very prickly salmon-berry bushes; but, under the circumstances, I don't suppose that this verbal turpitude will ever be laid to my charge. Surely if any member of the Humane Society, or the Society for the Protection of Aborigines, had seen at that moment a member of a liberal profession sweating along, with a weighty and slightly odorous savage on his back, the least he could have done at the next committee meeting would have been to propose me a medal and badge. Perhaps it is not too late yet. I fancy, however, as most of these bodies place rather more stress on words than acts, that the confession of having been betrayed into verbal impatience may go against me. At all events, I had my work that afternoon. I went on as far as I could before dark, though thoroughly exhausted and nearly choked, and at last backed my patient up against a fallen tree for the night. My first work was to thoroughly bathe myself in a very cold stream, which ran close by, and doubtless debouched into the river I was making for. I felt rather more refreshed after that, and set about lighting a fire—a very simple matter, as the wood was dry and plentiful. I was, however, too tired to cook any supper, and, though it may be not very good dietetic practice, both physician and patient supped heartily on whisky, salt pork, and "damper," which supper exhausted our stock of comestibles; for I had been too much occupied by my humane duties all day to hunt. We then lay down and slept soundly until daybreak.

By dawn, profiting by my experiences of the preceding day, I determined to avoid the heat of the sun, and make an early start, sore as my bones were. As we had finished our provisions, our only breakfast promised to be a little whisky and water; but just as we were mixing the last of our grog

I heard a drumming of grouse in the bush. The North-western grouse all "tree," and accordingly I had no trouble in bringing down three with my revolver, commencing with the one on the lower branches, and then going upwards, so that the fall of the dead ones did not flush the others. This is a common method of pot-hunting. Two of these skinned (to save the trouble of plucking) and roasted by the fire, afforded a good breakfast. The remaining one was reserved for supper. I then started on my weary trudge, though in better humour than I did the day before. I was now becoming in a manner accustomed to my burden, and was getting into such a doggedly obdurate state, that I determined, come whatever might, to get through my work —if not that day, on the following.

Since leaving the bend of the river where the accident had occurred, I had made as nearly as I could a straight course; and though it is difficult to calculate distances in these forests, I did not yet think that I was at all near to where we had left the canoe. We had not, however, gone more than a couple of hours before I heard the murmur of running water, and saw an open light space in the dark forest ahead of us. Could that be the river again? The boy insisted that it was, and as we approached the banks there was no mistaking the locality. There was no other big river anywhere in this vicinity; but the river was here navigable, so that we must have struck it lower down. Almost simultaneously the boy and I detected footprints in the damp soil—those of a hobnail boot and a bare foot—and with a joyous cheer I made for the place where they emerged from the river. We could scarcely believe our eyes when we detected that they were our own footsteps of a few days back, and we had by the merest chance come upon the

river not a hundred yards from where we had left it! Our canoe was hidden in the bushes all safely out of the heat of the sun. In a few minutes it was equipped, launched, and floating down the river, I steering while the youth kept a look-out ahead.

At midday we halted to eat the grouse, and feeling now rather hungry, I set off in search of a deer, and was successful in killing a fine buck, with the choice pieces of which we refreshed ourselves. The river navigation was rather troublesome, and every now and again I had to get out and ease the canoe off the spits where I had run it on to; but on the whole we met with no accident, and in the course of a couple of hours arrived at the sea. Here we found some cousins of my patient encamped, and they ("for a consideration," you may be sure, for it was "nothing for nothing" among these people) helped me up the coast for a few miles to the village where the boy's father lived. Then I got him off my hands, and after hints about "buying his leg" from the avaricious parents, I left, thoroughly sick of the whole job and the ingratitude of all concerned. However, happening to visit the village some weeks after, I found my patient running about quite well—having, aided by a good constitution and wondrous good luck, perfectly recovered, without any other treatment than what he had got from me. In fact, the bark bandages were never removed until he could walk. I found that my fame had in the meantime grown great in the land, and that bandages of bark had the reputation of being the newest "white man's medicine," and were being adopted for all the ills which flesh is heir to, from an inflammation of the lungs to a gunshot wound. Thereafter, if anybody find them in vogue among the Indians, I beg that he will not run away with the

notion that it is an aboriginal method of cure. I am "the sole and only inventor." I have said that I found myself a small hero on account of my cure. So I did. Still, the applause which greeted me was not of a sufficiently enthusiastic description to tempt me to renew my aboriginal medical or surgical practice. On the whole, I begin to agree with my profane friend the trader, who, in the midst of his tirade of oaths, consequent on my first unfortunate escapade, let drop this aphorism—"Humanity! Tell ye what, cap'n; if anybody's a goin' to die, better them nor you; a sight better—a blessed sight better!" This view may not be unmixedly humane, but, nevertheless, I scarcely think that any reader of the foregoing pages will consider that my experience of medical practice among the North American Indians has been of so agreeable a nature as to incline me to adopt views over-philanthropic.

A ZIGZAG JOURNEY THROUGH MEXICO.

By Captain Mayne Reid.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

I was awakened from my slumber by the clanking of a heavy chain. Then came a plunge, succeeded by a hoarse, harsh rasping. After this an interval of silence; and I could feel that the ship lay motionless on the water. The R.M. steamer *Solent* had dropped her anchor.

Hastening upon deck, I beheld a dark grey wall rising up from the surface of the sea. Its oblique façade and loopholed parapet proclaimed it a fortress. My eye was carried up a tall tower to a flagstaff on its top, from which floated a tricolour of red, white, and green, disposed in stripes running parallel to the staff. I recognised the flag of the "eagle and nopal"—the banner of the Mexican Republic; and knew that the fortress over which it waved was the famed castle of San Juan de Ulua.

Looking landward, I saw a city standing so close to the water's edge as to appear sea-washed; compact as a picture in its frame; the houses of Moorish aspect, flat-roofed, horizontally-terraced, with here and there the fronds of a palm-tree appearing over their parapets; the horizontal line

at frequent intervals interrupted by towers, domes, and cupolas ; some of these glistening under a tesselated covering of parti-coloured Spanish tiles.

Looking further shoreward, the eye roamed over an extensive tract of silver-grey sand, rising in downs, or *dunes*, and enclosing a semicircular plain, on which the city stood, scarcely a spot of verdure mottling its dreary monotony, till, in the far distance beyond, the gaze rested upon a purple expanse, separated by an irregular waving line from the azure of the sky—mountains, one rising thousands of feet above its fellows, cone-shaped, carrying the eternal snow !

With the town displaying its Hispano-Moriscan architecture before my eyes, I might have fancied myself looking upon a seaport in the south of Spain, or on the coast of Morocco, the mountains being the Sierra Morena, or a distant chain of the Atlas ; while the vultures perched upon the parapets of the houses, and playing like swallows around the cupolas, would not have dispelled the fancy. But the flag reminded me of where I was. I knew the town itself, and had seen it before. For the second time in my life I was looking upon the "City of the True Cross" (*La villa rica de Vera Cruz*); and the mountains beyond were a chain of the Mexican Andes—the one with the snow-clad cone being the *volcan* of Orizava.

A steamer's boat landed me on the *muello*—a handsome jetty that projects for some distance into the sea, towards San Juan. It is the favourite promenade of the Veracruzanos : and a crowd of both sexes had collected upon it to witness the landings from the steamer; some to make new acquaintances, others to welcome home friends who had been afar.

As I set foot upon the top of the jetty-stairs, a gentle-

MEXICAN LADY AND SERVANT.

man in snow-white raiment, with a red crape scarf round his waist and a *jipijapa* hat upon his head, stepped forward, grasped me by the hand, and introduced me to a dark-eyed señorita—his daughter. This was Don Hilario C——, an old acquaintance, whom I had not seen since the charming creature by his side came out of her cradle.

In five minutes after, we were seated in a handsome carriage, drawn by a pair of fast-trotting *frisones*, and driven by a brown-skinned coachman in a blue haircloth jacket, with broad-brimmed black glaze hat shading his sharp Arab-like features from the sun. In ten more, I had entered Don Hilario's house; and, on crossing the threshold was told it was not his, but *mine*, as also everything it contained.

How unlike my landing on this same coast just twenty years before! Then, instead of quietly climbing up the stairs of the Mole, and being welcomed with open arms and friendly grasp, I debarked from a surf-boat under the lee of the Isle Sacrificios; leaped waist-deep into the water, and waded ashore, followed by a hundred men in uniform, with loaded rifle in one hand, and cartouche-box held high in the other, with thousands of like waders on the right and left, all plunging madly forward, till we stood high and dry, but dripping, upon the beach; hostile artillery playing upon us from the fortress of San Juan and the Fort of Santiago, their shot and shells just falling short of us. Then, further wading, not through water, but a sea of sand, equally obstructive and fatiguing, until we had completed the investment, and the City of the True Cross lay within the concavity of a thin semicircle of sky-blue uniforms, in a month after to close upon and clutch it. A month among these terrible *medanos*, with the soft sand constantly drifting in our faces, and mingling with our food—a month that

seemed a year; and then the tricolour on San Juan gave place to the flag of the stars and stripes, and we marched into the old town, built by the Marquis of Monterey, nearly three centuries before, and became for the time its masters. How different, too, my purpose in then seeking Mexico, from that which now attracted me to her shores! Then I came as an enemy, sword in hand, lured by a love of glory, and the gratification of that warlike impulse of youth, which in maturer years we may, perchance, see cause to regret. Now, pen in hand, was I setting foot upon the soil of Anahuac, full of friendly feeling towards its people; determined on a tranquil study and faithful delineation of its scenery, costumes, and customs. As a soldier, even in the intervals of strife, with thoughts otherwise directed, I had looked upon these things without giving them the slightest attention. Nevertheless, I had brought away the impression that every scene in New Spain is a picture worthy of being painted; every costume a study for the artist; every custom of striking interest, at least to the contemplation of a stranger. With such remembrances of Mexico, no wonder I longed to revist it.

My longing was, at length, to be gratified; and as I sat on the roof of Don Hilario's house, smoking best havanas, and sipping sweet Canary wine, my eyes were not bent upon the blue waves of the sea that had borne me thither, but ever turning towards the snow-capped summit of Orizava, and the black basaltic crater of Peroté, on both of whose tops I intended ere long to stand.

But not until I had explored the country lying between —the *tierra caliente*, with its truly tropical vegetation, as also the *piedmont*, or foothills, of the great Cordillera, where the orchis entwines itself around the oak, and the banana

grows side by side with the rose-bush, the peach, and the apple-tree.

Don Hilario had placed his house, with all that it contained, at my disposal. "*A servicio de V., señor*," were the identical words in which the proffer was made. As I had been in Mexico before, I knew the meaning of the phrase, and its worth; but I also knew that in his case the offer was worth the words, and that everything he possessed—of course, excepting his beautiful daughter—was at my disposal. It was the recompense of a service I had done him in the old war-time; in short, the saving of his life.

But with all his pressing hospitality, he could not retain me in Vera Cruz beyond the limits of a week. Each morning that I mounted up to the *azotea* of his house, the snowy cone of *Citlapetl* (Mountain of the Star), rose-tinted with the rising sun, like a star seemed to beacon me on; and before a week had elapsed I was in the saddle, having bidden Don Hilaria and his daughter "*adios*."

A GLANCE AT THE "CITY OF THE TRUE CROSS" BEFORE LEAVING IT.

Vera Cruz may be regarded as one of the smaller cities, its population not exceeding 20,000. It is, nevertheless, a city in the true sense of the term, showing a fair share of civic grandeur in its private dwellings, as well as public buildings. Among these the numerous churches are conspicuous, most of them in the Italian architectural style of the seventeenth century, with low towers and tall cupolas, the latter covered with parti-coloured japanned tiles. The private houses are of the Hispano-Moriscan style, not only in outward aspect, but also in their interior arrangement. The

walls are massive; in height some of them reaching a third storey, though the greater number have only two. The windows are usually without glass, protected by iron bars set vertically—the *reja*—and often with projecting balconies. Nearly all have a quadrangular courtyard in the centre, around which are the different apartments, their doors opening upon a covered piazza, which is carried partially, or wholly, around the sides. The quadrangular court is the *patio*, and is reached from the street by a wide doorway capable of admitting a carriage, along an arched or covered passage called the *saguan*.

The piazza is the favourite lounging-place of the family; and is capable of being screened from intruding eyes, or the rays of the sun, by Venetian lattice-work, or by curtains of Chinese cloth, or matting, that run upon rollers.

On one side a stone stairway—*escalera*—is carried up to the second storey, where, in houses of the better class, the piazza is repeated. The stairway continued leads on to the top of the house, called the *azotea*—a flat roof of flagging tiles, or painted brickwork, surrounded by a slight parapet, and sometimes surmounted by a *mirador* (belvedere). The *azotea* is also a favourite loitering-place; but only in the cool of the morning or late in the afternoon, when the sun is down near the horizon, and his rays have lost a portion of their tropical strength. Flowers in pots, even trees, set over the *azotea*, add greatly to its attractions. Palm-trees are thus occasionally placed; and their fronds curving gracefully over the parapet lend a truly Southern aspect to the dwelling. The courtyard below is also used as a conservatory, where rare plants are kept in pots, or large vases. In passing along the street, and looking in through the shaded *saguan*, you may often see the female servants,

or even catch a glimpse of the fair señoritas of the family flitting among these flowers.

In cities where a head of water can be obtained there is usually a fountain in the *patio*, either of marble or ornamental masonwork, with a sparkling jet that flings its spray over the foliage and flowers. In Vera Cruz, however, built upon a bed of sea-sand, running water is not to be had. Even that required for domestic purposes has to be caught in large cisterns, of which there is one, usually of stone, attached to nearly every house. The chief supply, however, is obtained from an aqueduct leading from the Jamapa river, which furnishes water of only a very indifferent quality.

In the domestic economy of most Mexican towns the precious fluid plays an important part, and the *aguador* who furnishes it is, in consequence, a very important personage. This arises from the fact that there is no system of supply by means of pipes; therefore the water-carrier has to make a daily visit to each house, as punctually as the milkman or the baker. Should he fail in one of his periodical calls, the culinary operations get sadly out of gear, or even suspended. Knowing his power he is sometimes tyrannical, but always shows himself master of the situation. He is generally, however, a very civil sort of fellow; and as, in emptying his jars, he must needs spend some time in the company of the servants, and gossip a good deal with them, he is regarded as a great news-bearer, and the depositary of some valuable family secrets. The young ladies of the house often condescend to hold converse with him; and, if scandal speak the truth, he not unfrequently becomes the bearer of a *billet-doux*. In short, he is one of the "institutions" of a Mexican city, and therefore a character to be described. His appearance is of itself a picture. He is

dressed in a cotton shirt, usually with the sleeves rolled up, wide trousers (*calzoneros*) of leather hanging loose upon his limbs, and cotton drawers (*calzoncillos*) underneath, though the bottoms of both are generally tucked up, leaving the legs bare. His head-dress is a kind of casque, or helmet, of stout leather, with a projecting peak in front. He has, besides, an apron of tanned sheepskin in front, and behind a sort of pad of the same material, to defend his spine against the chafing of the water-jar. Of these he carries two. They are of different sizes, somewhat urn-shaped, and of red pottery, unglazed, porous, and therefore suitable for keeping the water cool. The larger one rests upon his spine above the hips, suspended by a leather strap, which passes over his forehead, so that the weight is supported upon his temples. The smaller jar hangs down in front, and is also suspended by a strap, which crosses the back part of the head or the nape of the neck. The two vessels thus balance one another, causing the weight to press directly over the centre of gravity of the body. Thus equipped, the aguador may be seen at all hours passing along the streets, and calling out in shrill monotone, "*Agua fresca, agua fria!*" (fresh, cool water).

The water-carrier seen in Vera Cruz is, however, a very different sort of personage. He illustrates the indolent habits of the tropical *tierra caliente*, by employing a donkey or mule to carry his water for him, which the animal does by bearing four small barrels, set in a framework upon its pack-saddle.

Small though it be, the city of Vera Cruz contains much that should interest a traveller. If an Englishman, he will be struck with its foreign appearance, as also with its resemblance to the cities of Southern Europe—especially

Spain. He will observe many customs that can be traced directly to the Moors, and such as still linger in Andalusia. In the Mexican city, however, he will see a greater variety of complexions: for in addition to the Iberian, two other distinct races have contributed to form its mixed, motley population. The white or olive-white Creole and Spaniard; the brown *mestizo*, or mixed blood of Spanish and Indian; the darker brown Indian himself; the bistre brown mélange, between Indian and negro, known as the *zambo;* the negro *pur sang;* his, or rather her, crosses with the white man—mulattoes and quadroons—are all encountered in the streets of Vera Cruz. It is not the same with most other Mexican cities. Only in the eastern sea-coast towns—Matamoras, Tampico, Campeachy, Tabasco, and Vera Cruz—or in the adjacent low-lying hot lands, does the negro appear as a notable feature of the population.

The costumes, and many of the customs, of Vera Cruz strike the traveller as picturesque and peculiar. Most of them we shall meet further on, in other towns and villages of the *tierra caliente*, or in those of the table-lands, where they may be more fully described. At first landing, however, the stranger cannot help being impressed with the quaint oddness of much that here meets him, and which he may not have seen before, or perhaps only in pictures. The church, represented by *curas* lounging about in Don Basilio hats and long black robes reaching to their ankles; monks with shaven crown, cowl, and scapulary; soldiers in straw hats and uniforms of cheap, coarse linen; negroes, clothed in white cotton, jabbering at every corner, and violently gesticulating; the Indians, more silent, seated beside the wares they have brought into the market; fruits of twenty different kinds; wild birds in their cages; fireflies (*cocuyos*)

for the adornment of the hair; and perhaps an armadillo, or agouti—all will be new to him. And then there is the Creole citizen, of sallow complexion, slight and slender-limbed, dressed in half European costume, with short round jacket and pantaloons, fitting tight over the hips; the countryman, in his splendid *ranchero* dress, with bright-coloured cloak, *sérapé* or *manga*, wide velveteen trousers, *botas*, and grand spurs; the *poblana*, in sleeveless chemise of snow-white linen, petticoat with lace points, nude ankles, and small well-shaped feet, encased in satin slippers; and last, but perhaps most imposing of all, the grand señora or señorita, in rich silk, with high shell comb upon her head, and a black mantilla falling over her fair shoulders, going to or returning from church, moving along with that majestic step said to be peculiar to the dames of Andalusia.

At certain seasons of the year the streets of Vera Cruz present an animated spectacle. This is in the winter months, when foreign ships are lading in port, and the *arrieros* with their long mule trains come down to the coast, to bring the produce to be exported, and to take back the import goods. In the hot summer months, however, when the dreaded *vomito* becomes dangerous, and sometimes desolates this devoted city, active life seems for a time suspended, and the streets are left to straying dogs, who, quarrelling with the vultures, contest with them possession of the scraps cast out. Then Vera Cruz becomes what it has often been called—*Una ciudad de los muertos* (a city of the dead).

EVANGELISTAS, SCAVENGERS, AND SEREÑOS.

The European traveller, strolling through the streets of a Mexican city, will see, under the shade of some portico or

AN EVANGELISTA.

projecting wall, an old gentleman of strikingly peculiar appearance. He is habited in a suit of rusty black, with a pair of horn spectacles resting across the ridge of his nose. Gleaming behind the glass lenses, and under thick bushy brows, are two keen sparkling eyes that gaze upon the passers-by with an inquiring look, as if their owner solicited a purchase of his services. What these are may be deduced from his attitude and the apparatus with which he is furnished. He is seated upon a low stool, or it may be a doorstep, with a piece of board laid across his knees. Upon this rests a sheet or two of writing-paper; while the classical inkhorn, suspended from a button on his breast, with a pen stuck behind his ear, or perhaps held between his fingers, show that he is ready to commence writing at a moment's notice. All this, with his knowing, learned glance and threadbare habiliments, give him the typical characteristic air of the old Spanish notary, of which he reminds you. He is the *evangelista*, or public scribe. He has, however, no connection with the law; and notwithstanding the sacred character of his professional title, he has nothing to do with religion; indeed, often rather the opposite. He is simply a professional penman; and, in a country where education is so little attended to, his services are in frequent requisition. His clients are mostly of the lower class—domestic servants, small shopkeepers, artisans, labourers, *leperos*, and very often Indians, who are all ignorant of the art of writing. By these he is employed to write letters of business; congratulatory epistles to friends who have had a stroke of good fortune, or condolence when the reverse; petitions asking a favour; notes requesting payment of an account, or threats in the event of its being refused; invitations to festivals or fandangoes; or solicitations to become *compadre* or *comadre*

—that is, godfather or godmother at a christening—an important matter in Mexico. Love, however, is the staple commodity in which he deals, and the principal source of his support. Not that it is his trade to make it—only to give it expression on paper. His business is to compose *billets-doux* for lovers whose education does not enable them to do the epistolary part themselves. Often a pretty belle of the people—a *poblana*—may be seen bending beside him with her lips close to his ear, earnestly dictating the impulse of her passion in a low tone and terms of tender endearment; or, it may be, in dire threats that spring from a sentiment of jealousy. With her *rebozo tapado*, although it be in broad daylight, she is not so easily recognised; for only her dark flashing eye may be visible through the slight opening in the scarf of bluish-grey. At other times it is a lover of the masculine gender who seeks the assistance of the evangelista—some strapping fellow with a *serapé* around his shoulders, and broad-brimmed hat shading his swarthy face as he whisperingly pronounces the words he wishes conveyed to his sweetheart.

Thus placed between the two parties, and made the depositary of the secrets of both, the evangelista possesses a rare power; and he is suspected of sometimes using it for improper purposes. There are some who do not hesitate to apply to him the ugly epithet of *alcahuete*, or "go-between."

The calling of the evangelista is lucrative in its way, his services being neither gratuitous nor ill-paid. Some of these professional scribes derive a considerable income from their versatile talents. Nor are their charges in all cases the same. It depends on the length of the letter, as also on the style in which the script is executed; whether it is to be plain or bordered, and whether it is to have devices. The

evangelista is usually a master in the chirographic art, with some skill at limning; and can depict a heart in water-colours pierced by an arrow; or two hearts impaled on the same shaft, with Cupid close by holding the bow that has sent it; or a pair of turtle-doves amorously billing in the midst of a garland of flowers. Or, if it be a threatening letter, it will have for its emblem a hand holding a stiletto, and ready to strike. All these things cost extra, according to the elegance of the design, or the talent required for their execution.

Sometimes the evangelista is above sitting upon a door-step or the plinth of a church pillar, with a mere bit of board across his knees. He then sets up a regular desk or table, with a comfortable chair, and perhaps an extra one for his customers.

It is still, however, in the open air, *sub Jove*, or under the shadow of a *portal*, in some quiet corner of the street or square, where, in addition to letter-writing, he does a little retail business in pens, ink, envelopes, and small stationery in general. He has no fear of the police interfering with him, and telling him to "move on;" he knows that he is an institution of the country, and, from the state of its education a necessity.

The traveller turns from the spectacle of this quaint calling to one less pleasant of contemplation. His ear is assailed by the clanking of chains; and, looking around, he sees a number of men of swarth skin and savage physiognomy, half-naked, half-clad in filthy rags, carrying brooms, shovels, and scrapers. They are coupled two-and-two, and it is the clank of their iron couplings that has caused him to look round.

In their midst, or standing beside them, are two or three

soldiers, in slouching attitudes and slouchingly attired, but with their bayonets fixed, showing that they have these *sans-culottes* in charge. It is the "chain-gang," composed of prison malefactors, temporarily taken from their cells to act as scavengers of the streets. Many of them are known, noted robbers, and not a few red-handed murderers. It is not a pleasant spectacle, though it may be a profitable one to many who witness it—in the way of warning. Unquestionably it is better that these gaol-birds should be thus utilised, instead of, as with us, uselessly and almost ludicrously employed in picking oakum.

In Vera Cruz the *sereño*, or night-watchman, is a character sure to make himself known and heard—sometimes to the keeping awake those who would fain go to sleep. He perambulates the pavement at all hours of the night, making it hideous by his shrill treble, as he calls out the time along with the state of the weather, which he does four times an hour, Like everybody else in Mexico, the sereño wears a broad-brimmed hat, and a sort of loose frock, belted around the waist. In the cooler hours of the night he is swathed in a ponderous caped cloak, reaching down to his heels. In one hand he carries a long spear, and in the other a clumsy old-fashioned lantern ; while from his waistbelt is suspended the equally old-fashioned watchman's rattle—wherewith to sound an alarm in case of fire, a discovery of thieves, or a difficulty with drunken roysterers. In contemplating the sereño, one is reminded of London in bygone years ; when night-watchmen performed the functions now entrusted to the police, with the additional duty of crying out the hour and the condition of the weather. "Twelve o'clock ; a clear, starry night ; all's well !" In Vera Cruz, or any other Mexican city, you will still hear just such a rigmarole pro-

SEREÑOS.

claimed in the Spanish tongue: "*Las doce y medio—tiempo sereño!*" And from the long-drawn treble, dwelling double time on the last word, the Mexican watchman has obtained his odd appellation.

The sereño occasionally takes up a thief or captures a burglar; but more frequently permits both to follow their vocation free, himself preferring to enjoy a nap in the portico of some church or convent, with his lantern set upon the step beside him; and not unfrequently he awakes to find it gone, and also his rattle—carried off by the young "swells" (*jovenes dorados*) returning from the gambling-room or ball.

SEÑORAS, POBLANAS, AND COCUYOS.

It is in the evening hour that the *calles* of Vera Cruz offer the most agreeable promenade. Then the hot tropic sun has disappeared behind the crest of the Cordilleras, and the cool sea-breeze circulates through the streets. The repulsive "chain-gang" has been taken back to their prison-cells, while their fellow-scavengers, the vultures—also of repulsive aspect—have forsaken the pavement and gone to roost on the cupolas and church-towers. At least a pair of these foul birds may be seen perched upon every cross—one on each arm, by way of balance—fit symbol of the crucified malefactors.

Down in the street-doors, and up in the window-balconies, or higher still along the terraced roofs of the houses, may be observed tableaux less repellant—many of them attractive. There you may see the grand señora of true Andalusian type, dressed in silk, and flirting her fan, whose every motion has a meaning. She stands within a casement

that has no glass, only a *grille* of iron bars—the *reja* that projects so as to give space for a balcony;—or she leans over the parapet that borders the *azotea* above. She is not unobserved. There is a *caballero* in the street below, or perhaps on some other *azotea*, watching her with eager scrutinising glance. He can interpret every flirt of her fan, and read his fate in its turnings and twitchings.

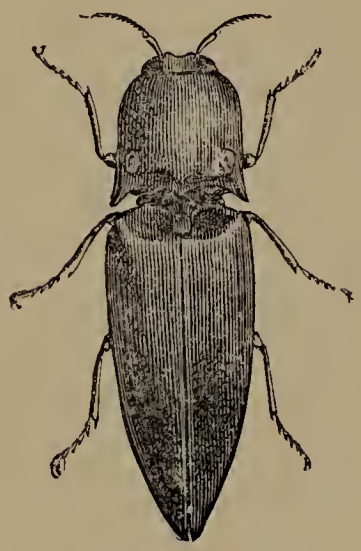
Enter the streets of lesser note, that run between dwellings of a more unpretentious style—the homes of the people—and you behold a similar spectacle. Here it is the *poblana*—mestiza, mulatta, or quadroon—who is the cynosure, and belle reigning supreme. She stands in the open window or doorway of a single-storey house, freely chatting with a group of her male admirers, and taking but slight trouble to conceal her glowing charms. Neither in beauty, nor yet in the tastefulness of her attire, need she feel humiliated by comparison with the more aristocratic señora of the mansion; while in point of picturesqueness she leaves the latter far behind. The *poblana* of a Mexican city is the representative type of the belle of the people, known in Cadiz, Seville, and Madrid as the *manola*. Their costume, however, is somewhat different; that of the Mexican beauty having certain features that are altogether indigenous and national. The tight-fitting Andalusian bodice is occasionally, though rarely, seen. Instead, the bust is covered with a loose chemise of snow-white lawn, or linen, gathered around the neck, and elaborately embroidered, with short sleeves, lace-fringed, and prettily contrasting with the olive-tinted epidermis of the arms. Around the waist is a sash or cincture of silk crape, of Chinese fabric, which helps to sustain the *enagua*, or petticoat of white or figured muslin, with a skirt, lace-bordered, and so scant as to show under-

neath the well-turned ankle and *mignon* foot, with the tiniest satin slipper poised upon its toe. Above, a pair of dark brown or jet black eyes, glancing under a profusion of purple-black hair—slightly crisped if a quadroon's—adorned with fresh flowers of the orange, grenadine, or "cacalosuchil" (*Plumeria*); often still further ornamented by the sparkle of a *cocuyo*, the grand firefly of the tropics, whose sheen of diamonds, emeralds, and flame becomes brighter and brighter as the twilight darkens down; until, in the deep obscurity of the night, its coruscation far excels that of precious stones—even under the glare of gaslight.

Of all phosphorescent creatures the grand firefly of tropical America (*Elater noctilucus*) is certainly the most interesting. It is not a fly, as its English appellation would lead one to believe, but a beetle—a scarabæus with wings. The body is of ovoid shape, of glossy brown colour, and in bulk equal to the fore-joint of an ordinary-sized thumb. But your attention is at once attracted to its eye-like spots, as large as swan-shot, that appear like globes of fire, in which green and gold and flame are equally commingled. And when the insect spreads its wings in flight, so that you obtain a view of its abdomen, you there see a broad disc of phosphorescence, almost as brilliant as a jet of gas. The common firefly of more northern regions—in the United States known by the ill-fitting appellation of "lightning bug"—is but a farthing dip compared with this splendid luminary of the tropics.

With three or four *cocuyos* placed under an inverted tumbler you may read the smallest type; and even one held in the fingers, close to the surface of a sheet of paper, will enable you to decipher the writing upon it without any difficulty. I have myself had occasion to make use of them

for this purpose; and more than once, in traversing the tropical forest by night, have availed myself of this living lamp to consult the dial of my watch—just as one might use the fire of a cigar. But the most singular use to which they are put is that above alluded to—as an ornament for the hair, and at times, too, the skirt of the dress. It is usually the belles of the lower orders who affect this species of adornment, though I have also seen cocuyos gleaming amid the tresses of the fine lady.



The Cucuyo (*Pyrophorus noctilucus*).

It is scarcely necessary to say that it is the living insect which is pressed into this service. When dead, the *elater* loses its phosphoric brightness, as the dolphin its iridescence. When wanted as a gem of the first water, it must not only be alive, but in good health; and to secure this, the insect is carefully kept in a little cane cage—which may be regarded as its casket—and generally fed by the fair creatures of whose trousseau it forms so conspicuous a part. Its food consists of the juice of the sugar-cane—small pieces of which, freshly peeled, are from time to time placed inside its cage. When required to enact the *rôle* of a jewel, it is taken out of its prison, impaled upon a long pin, and set on the plaits of the hair, in such a position that its two grand gleaming lamps may be fully exposed to view. On first seeing this done, I deemed it the quintessence of cruelty, and ventured a mild remonstrance. The young lady who was favouring me with the exhibition made light of my soft-

heartedness, with a laugh ; which would have confirmed me in my opinion of her cruelty but for what followed. She plucked the cocuyo from her head, and pointed out a loop-like integument underneath the thorax, through which the pin had been passed ; so that in reality it was not *impaled*, as I had supposed. Furthermore, she informed me that the creature suffered no inconvenience from being thus transfixed, beyond that of being confined when, doubtless, it would rather be free. Furnished with this singular loop, or link, one cannot help fancying that the insect was designed for this very purpose.

Unlike the common fireflies, the *Elater noctilucus* is not found in large numbers. In no place have I seen it in swarms, but only in twos and threes ; though there are certain spots in the tropical forest where it is more numerous. It specially resorts to the plantations of sugar-cane, the juice of which is its principal food. It also finds sustenance in other plants and flowers yielding sap of a similar nature. Flying about after the manner of other night-beetles, it is not easily caught, and is therefore a marketable article—being one of the commodities brought in by the country-people, and sold to the señoritas of the city.

A WALLED CITY.

It was early in January when I left Vera Cruz—my destination being the city of Mexico. But first I determined to see something of the country lying east. Two grand routes conduct from Vera Cruz to the capital ; the northern running through Jalapa, the southern by Orizava. Neither is direct, the former being forced far to the north, and the latter to the south, by the great mountain-group of

which the volcano of Orizava is the culminating point, and Perote the projection. I could have reached the town of Orizava by rail—the *camino de hierro* being then completed so far—or Jalapa by stage-coach. Or I could have been transported to either place in a *litera*, the Mexican sedan, borne between two mules. But I had no wish to avail myself of any of these modes of travel. My purpose was not speed, nor yet luxury. On the contrary, I was undertaking an excursion that I knew to be fraught with fatigues and hardships, and which would carry me along paths where coach could not go, nor sedan be transported. For the general direction of my route, I intended keeping near the Jalapa road—departing from it to the right or the left, at certain points where the adjacent country appeared most deserving of exploration. In short, I designed a *zigzag* journey through the interior of Mexico. Travelling thus I could behold those more romantic spots and scenes for which the country is so celebrated, and study its people in all their primitive picturesqueness, unchanged by contact with the stranger. For the same reason, I resolved as much as possible to shun being myself taken for a stranger. I could speak the language of the people, was dark enough in complexion, and had adopted their garb—the full *ranchero* dress—not only to facilitate my movements, and screen me from occasional imposition, but because I knew it to be the "toggery" best suited to the saddle, and especially for such a journey as I was undertaking. As yet I had neither guide nor servant, but a man who was to act in this double capacity would be found farther on—upon an estate belonging to Don Hilario, near the village of Santa Fé. My friend had given me the clue to discover this individual, described by him as *un hombre de bien* (an honest

fellow) and one well acquainted with all the ways of the country, its highways and byeways. Don Hilario had written to tell him I was coming, and given him orders to prepare for accompanying me. So far as Santa Fé I needed no guide. I had scouted that country twenty years before, and, to use a familiar expression, knew every inch of it; so that, on setting forth from Vera Cruz, I might have been described, after the mode of an immortal novelist, as "a solitary horseman, with a *serapé* over his shoulders and a Tyrolese hat upon his head, seen riding out from one of the gates of the city of Vera Cruz, and heading his horse towards the interior."

It may seem odd to speak of the *gates* of an American city, but in Vera Cruz, as in most other Mexican towns, there are such; and you cannot enter or go out without passing through a gate, with a sentry standing, or it may be *sitting*, guard by it, and a squad of slovenly soldiers lounging under the shadow of its portals. These gates, called *garitas*, are of the old fortified-city type, with guard-room attached; though for any obstruction to an enemy they would be of slight service. The chief object in maintaining them is the collection of the *alcabala*—a duty levied on all produce and other commodities that enter the city for sale. It is, in fact, the *octroi* of Mexico, and other parts of Spanish America—one of those absurd imposts, only causing obstruction to trade, there as elsewhere.

There are three of these gates giving exit from Vera Cruz. One, the *Puerta de la Merced*, leads out southward for Alvarado, and other towns along the coast. Only on this side is there anything like a suburb, and that but a few buildings connected with the cemetery, the Alameda, or public promenade, and, of later years, a railway-station. That

opening northward, *Puerta de Mexico*, is for the Jalapa road, leading also to Villa Antigua—the Vera Cruz of Cortez—on the Antigua river. On this route there are no suburban houses; nor are there any on the third road, which, passing out through the *Puerta Nueva*, about half-way between the other two, strikes at once into the interior of the country.

Vera Cruz is not only a walled city, but a fortified one—a thing still more rarely met with in America. There is a battlement, or breakwater, on the sea side, of coral rock, defending it from the tidal wash; while landward it is girt by a wall of the same material, with fortresses at each flank, and redoubts here and there all around. The wall is about ten feet in height, and presumptively meant as a work of defence. During the siege of 1846 the American artillerists found no difficulty in breaching it—round shot smashing through the madrepore, and, as an Irishman might say, knocking it into "smithereens." The wall is scarcely worth breaching; and even scaling-ladders would be almost superfluous for storming it. An active soldier could easily spring up to its crest, or get hoisted on the shoulders of a comrade.

Quite as ludicrous was another defensive scheme put in practice by the besieged on that occasion. Outside the slight *enceinte*, and all around, a double row of pits was dug in the soft sand. They were circular, some three or four feet deep, and of the shape of inverted cones. In the apex bottom of each was a spear-head, set point upward. It was supposed that the American stormers—had it come to storming—would have been silly enough to impale themselves on these spikes! A blind man might have avoided the pits; and, even in the darkest night, it would have been

THE PLAZA GRANDE.

an easy matter to pass between any two of them without tumbling in. It was a contrivance worthy of those Chinese engineers who build fortresses of planks and pasteboard.

ZOPILOTES AND SAND-DUNES.

The city of Vera Cruz is in shape almost an exact semi-circle, the sea-wall, of about a mile in length, forming its diameter. At each extremity is a fort: Santiago on the south, and Concepcion flanking it on the north. Midway between the two the Mole projects towards San Juan, which lies directly abreast, about twelve hundred yards from the pier-head. The streets of the city cross one another rectangularly, and there is a large public square in the centre. The "Plaza Grande"—or, as it is sometimes called, *Plaza mayor*—is a characteristic feature of all Mexican cities. It is always in a central position, having the cathedral or church on one side; a second occupied by the Government buildings or town-house (*cabildo*); a block of warehouses with a covered footway in front (*portales*), taking up a third side; while the fourth is usually enclosed by a line of shops. It is the chief place of rendezvous at all times, but more especially in the later hours of the evening, when the sidewalk under the shade of the *portales* is frequently crowded by promenaders, and presents a very animated scene.

I passed through the Puerta Nueva, the gate that gives exit for Santa Fé. It debouches on a plain of sand—a trackless waste, that imparts the idea of a desert. As if to strengthen the impression, just on issuing from the gate a characteristic spectacle was presented: the carcase of a large animal, horse or mule—I did not stop to determine

which—surrounded by vultures, some of them perched upon and picking it.

These black vultures of Vera Cruz—called *zopilotes*—are a peculiar feature of the place. They are tame as domestic turkeys, roosting upon the towers, cupolas, and housetops. This comes from their being protected by law — on account of the valuable service they perform as scavengers. No one is allowed wantonly to destroy them. Twenty-five dollars is the penalty for shooting or otherwise killing, a *zopilote.*

Although to the ordinary observer there appears but one species of these birds, the naturalist can make out two, and most probably a third, existing in the coast-lands of Vera Cruz. The species within the city walls is that known in the Southern United States as the "carrion crow" (*Cathartes atratus*). But there is on this coast also the "turkey buzzard" (*C. aura*); and undoubtedly a third species different from either, more resembling the turkey buzzard than the carrion crow. It is, however, easily distinguished from the *C. aura*, by its plumage being of a more sable cast, and the red on its neck and legs of a deeper and livelier tint. It is the *Cathartes burrovianus.*

There is still another vulture which may be occasionally met with in the coast-lands of Vera Cruz, though not near the city itself. This is the most remarkable of all—in short, the monarch of the tribe. It is the "King Vulture" (*Sarcoramphus papa*). We may have occasion to speak of these vultures again.

Riding out from Vera Cruz, and striking towards the interior, you are met by the sand-dunes, there termed *medanos.* They trend north and south along the coast of the Mexican Gulf, following the shore-line, and generally

running parallel to it. There is a belt of low-lying level beach, or strand, between their nearest ridges and the sea. It is of varying breadth—from a few hundred yards to as much as a mile in some places. It is nearly of this breadth behind Vera Cruz, narrowing north and south, till the city seems to stand in a semicircular plain. At high tide, and when there is an in-blowing storm from the Gulf, a portion of the plain becomes flooded with sea-water; when the sand, being held in suspension, is carried shoreward by the current of the Gulf Stream, and deposited there. As the tide rarely rises over three feet, these inundations are of only occasional occurrence; and in the intervals the sand, desiccated under the hot tropical sun, is lifted by the first strong wind, and wafted about in every direction. The consequence is that *dunes* are formed at a short distance from the shore, assuming various shapes—such as mounds, or hillocks with dome-like tops, and ridges with precipitous sides and overhanging combs, between which lie deep hollows or valleys of equally fantastic formation. It is just as with snow in a great drift-storm; only that the medanos of the Mexican Gulf coast frequently attain to the height of real hills—rising sixty or seventy feet above the level of the adjacent plain. In some cases they have a breadth of several miles landward.

Those lying nearest the sea are subject to constant change by the shifting of the wind. In a single night a dome or ridge will disappear, while a new one will have arisen near by, perhaps trending in a different direction. Every road and path is obliterated; and even a bulky article, left for a while among the medanos, may be found "smoored' up, and perhaps quite irrecoverable.

An incident that occurred to me during the American

siege will illustrate this peculiarity. In command of a detachment of soldiers, I was ordered on one occasion to hold a position on a sand-ridge in the rear of the city. As there was a picket in front of us, I saw no necessity for the men to keep awake. They went to sleep, therefore, with heads resting upon their knapsacks. During the night there sprang up a *norté*, or "norther," as the Americans designate the dreaded tempest of the Mexican Gulf. The sand swirled up, and rushed about in every direction—not only entering our eyes, but striking the cheeks so sharply as to cause acute pain. The men, covering their faces with the capes of their overcoats, lay still and fell asleep. So also did I. I well remember my surprise, when I awoke next morning, just as the day was breaking. Near me was nothing bearing the slightest resemblance to a soldier, or human being of any kind. Only a number of protuberances that rose slightly above the general level of the surface. They were the *crania* of my still sleeping comrades, wrapped in their overcoat capes, and resting upon their knapsacks. But for their heads being thus elevated, they would no doubt have been, like the rest of their bodies, buried beneath the drift.

On another occasion, going with a party on scout, my men left their knapsacks, with other *impedimenta*, on the slope of a sand-dune. A *norté* sprang up during our absence; and on our return the knapsacks were nowhere to be seen. For a time we thought they had been picked up by an adventurous party of the enemy's *guerilleros;* till some one tramping over the spot, and sinking deep into the soft yielding sand, accidentally struck upon the lost equipments. But for this it is quite possible we might never have recovered them; as the ridge upon which they had been

deposited had altogether changed its general appearance—even its trend having to some extent altered.

The sand-dunes of the Vera Cruz coast should possess a high interest for the geologist, since they show a portion of the earth's crust in process of formation. In the course of time the hillocks are no longer disturbed by the wind, but become stationary. During the season of the heavy tropical rains—which is in summer when the northers have ceased to blow—the saturated sand resists the ordinary sea-breeze, and remains fixed for a sufficient length of time to enable plants to propagate themselves upon it. At first appear certain species of *comelinaceæ*, with thick succulent stalks. These vegetate rapidly, and as soon decay—the débris of their leaves forming a thin layer of mould. This gives nourishment to other plants of several different species and genera—principally *syngenesists* and *convolvuli*, with one or two kinds of cactus. Fresh seeds are blown thither by the wind, or carried in the beaks of birds; and new plants spring up, till the surface becomes quite covered with a vegetation, that shades it from sun and wind, while the roots and tendrils of the plants assist in keeping the sand in its place. Shrubs next spring up—among which may be mentioned a dwarf species of *acacia*, with large curved spines—a leguminous shrub—and finally trees.

But if vegetation is here rapidly produced, it is also sometimes more rapidly destroyed. The shrubs and trees are not unfrequently found growing in the hollows between the ridges. After remaining undisturbed for years, and until they have attained a considerable size, they get sanded up by the storm and quite killed. I have seen trees of twenty feet in height so smothered in a single night that only their topmost twigs were visible above the drift, while others had

entirely disappeared. Is it likely, then, that the presence of some of the ligneous relics found in our sand-pits may be due to the action of wind, and not, as generally supposed, to that of water?

From what is at present transpiring upon the coast of the Mexican Gulf, it is evident that the land is there gaining. The process may be slow, yet it is observable. When Vera Cruz was removed to its present site—nearly three centuries ago—the sea-level plain upon which it is built was of much greater extent than it is now. A series of ridges—once naked sand, now converted into firm soil, and covered with forest trees—are crossed as you proceed inward from the shore. Those lying farthest back show by their vegetable growth an older formation than the dunes nearest the sea. Several of these hillocks, in the rear of the city itself, are now so near as to be within cannon-shot of the walls—a disadvantage to Vera Cruz, in the event of bombardment from the land side. During the siege, this was proved by by the American artillerists; who, from the crests of these very sand-dunes, and with ordinary howitzers, threw shells into the town, and all over it.

On emerging from the gates of Vera Cruz, and facing westward, the traveller has before him about as dreary a prospect as may well be imagined. It is not easy to believe that beyond these sombre medanos—appearing to stretch illimitably before him—lies a zone of vegetation which, for luxuriant richness, will compare with anything in the world.

TRULY A STRANGE HORSEMAN.

Eager to enter the tropical forest, I spurred my horse across the plain, scarce staying to notice the stunted *mezquite*

trees that, here and there rising a few feet, seemed to struggle with the dust for existence; all the less likely to prove victorious in the strife since their leaves and *siliques* were being browsed upon by some scores of donkeys.

These asses, of very small size, are a feature in the scenery of Vera Cruz and its environs. They are great aids to the Indian, as well as the negro denizen of the coast region; and, although they are also common on the colder table-lands of the interior, they thrive equally well in the tropical *tierra caliente;* proving that this useful animal may be acclimatised almost anywhere. I believe the patient creature could endure the chill atmosphere of Iceland, as he does the sultry siroccos of Tangiers and Timbuctoo.

Talking of a sultry atmosphere, I was reminded of it as I rode across the sand-plain. It was the month of January, and yet the sun shining upon me had as much strength as in an English July. I pulled the *serapé* from off my shoulders, and folded it, Mexican fashion, across the croup of my saddle. While occupied with this little arrangement, I lost some few moments of time, during which I permitted my horse to take his own course. When I again caught hold of the bridle, and was preparing to proceed along the road, there *was no road!*

I was not so very much surprised at this; I knew the nature of the travelled tracks over the sand-plain of Vera Cruz, and that in a single night they often get obliterated. The wind does this, even when it is but a zephyr. I looked toward the medanos, still some distance ahead; but could not recognise the defiles through which, twenty years before, the Santa Fé road used to pass. The silhouette of the sand-hills seemed entirely changed.

I drew bridle, and sat hesitatingly in the saddle. I

began to think I had made a mistake, in supposing I could so easily find my way as far as Santa Fé. I regretted not having engaged a guide, or accepted the services of one that Don Hilario had offered me. I was still only a short gallop from the garita. Should I ride on, or go back? Saving the city dwellings behind, there was no house near—not even a hut; nor any human being—not even a donkey-driver.

While thus perplexed—seated in my saddle, and scanning the profile of the medanos—I became sensible of a sound, as of the pattering of a horse's hoofs in the soft sand. It came from behind me. Turning, I beheld a horseman. He was going at a gallop, and in a direction that, if continued, would bring him within about a hundred yards of where I had halted. I had just time to rein round, facing him, when he reached the point of passing me. But before I could call out to him to stop—that I might inquire the way—he too reined up, saving me the necessity.

I looked upon a picture that could be seen only on Mexican soil. The strange horseman was attired in the full *ranchero* dress—a costume that in point of picturesqueness is not anywhere excelled. The broad-brimmed hat upon his head, with a checkered kerchief underneath, was encircled by a *toquilla* of shining pearls; a *manga* of purple-coloured cloth streamed back from his shoulders, showing the sash of scarlet crape around his waist; *calzoneros* of blue velveteen; snow-white *calzoncillos*, and Cordovan leather boots, heavily spurred, appeared beneath. I recognised the "rig" at a glance—the typical costume of the *Jarocho*.

He was riding a fiery horse, which he had suddenly pulled back upon its haunches, until the long tresses of its tail touched the sand. Both horse and horseman remained

JAROCHOS.

in this attitude for some moments; though not until I could summon resolution to address him, and make known my wants. In this he anticipated me.

"*Nor deconocio*," he called out—in a patois which I knew how to translate as "*señor desconocido*"—"may I take the liberty of asking you whether you have lost your way? If not, it is unwise of you to be dallying where you are."

"Why?" I asked, spurring my horse, and trotting briskly towards him.

"Why! Do you not see the signs?"

"Signs! of what?"

"*El norté, ñor.* I suppose you understand that?"

"Yes; but I see no signs of a nortê. On the contrary, the air is uncomfortably hot, with a wind blowing from the south. I don't see the slightest indication of a storm."

"Indeed! And yet you appear to be one who should know what's what. After all, you're coming from the town. I, early this morning, rode in from the country; therefore I have the advantage of you. On my journey what did I see? Ants crossing the track, and crawling up the slopes to reach the higher ground. What did I hear? The *vaquero* kite screaming shrill. And weren't the bulls bellowing like mad, as I passed through the savannah! Besides, I saw the storm *suchil* shut up its flowers; which it never does unless at the approach of a norté. You say there's a hot wind blowing from the south. Well, *ñor*, that is the best proof that the norté is near. *Miro!* you see that little cloud standing over Misantla?"

He pointed towards the ridge of mountains rising to the northward, and known by this name.

"See! it is coming this way. Now, don't you feel its

first breath—cold as the snows of Orizava? Say, *ñor*, which way do you want to go? Decide at once, for I can't delay with you any longer. Are you for the country, or the town?"

"I am going to Santa Fé."

"My route also. Come on then, if you have any wish to travel in company."

"I have that wish."

"*Muy bien! vamonos!*"

Turning his horse's head to the road—to him well known—the Jarocho started off at a gallop. Spurring my own mount, I followed in his track, without saying a word.

We had not ridden much farther, before I became aware how truthfully he had forecast the weather. His natural barometers proved true to the forewarnings with which they had furnished him. A whiff of cold wind striking against my cheek—the one turned towards the polar star—admonished me that the norther was approaching; and, before we had ridden three hundred yards farther—going at a gallop—the sun was suddenly obscured by a cloud, the sky became dark as in a total eclipse, and the atmosphere felt as chill as if the snows of Citlatepetl had been showered upon the plain.

As we passed through the defiles of the medanos, the sand was swirling up into the air, and pelting spitefully against our faces. I was half suffocated, half blinded; nor could I have proceeded farther, but for my horse, whose speed enabled him to keep pace with the steed ridden by the Jarocho.

THE JAROCHOS.

We were soon clear of the *medanos*, and riding under the

shelter of trees; where, although still suffering the chill of the *norté*, the wind had ceased to buffet and the dust to blind us. Having unstrapped my *serapé* from the croup, and thrust my head through its central slit, I was no longer discommoded by the storm, and could give closer scrutiny to my travelling companion. A Jarocho, beyond doubt. His form, of medium size, somewhat spare, with limbs lithe and sinewy; his features, of oval shape, sharply defined, the lip and chin slightly bearded; the complexion, of clear brown, with a slight cinnamon or olive tint, all bespoke the Jarocho. Had it been in Spain I might have taken him for a gypsy: for there are many points of similarity between the *gitanos* of Andalusia and the inhabitants of the Vera Cruz coast-land—some writers even stating this to be the origin of the Jarocho people. The resemblance is not only in personal appearance, but in mental and moral characteristics. The Jarocho, like the gypsy, dislikes regular employment. He is, indeed, averse to industry of any kind, since it necessitates toil. He has a contempt for the town, as also its people, and prefers the country, and even the solitude of the forest; where, in his slight shed of a hut he can dwell undisturbed, indulging in the *dolce far niente* of the tropics. Unlike the Zingari, however, he has a fixed home, and is otherwise a respectable member of society—not like them socially, either an outcast or vagabond. Although but a small proprietor, he is master of the scenes around him; and intermittently follows an occupation: it may be the herding of cattle, or the burning of charcoal, combined with hunting, fishing, and collecting honey from the wild hives of the forest. At times he will take a turn at peddling, or contrabandism, for which last the oppressive custom-house regulations of his country give him a plausible excuse, and

the proximity of the coast, indented with inlets, a splendid opportunity. He takes pleasure, and holds it almost a civic virtue, to break through the Government monopoly of tobacco at Orizava; and will assist with equal alacrity in lading a smuggler with vanilla from the mountains and valleys of Misantla, cochineal from Oaxaca, or silver bars from the mines of Real del Monte. No man knows better than he the routes and roads, the paths and passes, trodden by the *contrabandista*. Although habitually given to a life of lassitude, no one shows more active energy, or will undergo greater toil, when engaged in any occupation that pleases him. Of these, cattle-herding and looking after horses are the most congenial. In both employments he spend most of his time, riding at a hard rate through the *chaparrals*, and over the savannas. In horsemanship he is a centaur, and would be ashamed of being seen on foot. His horse, or *andante*, as he calls the animal, stands at all times ready saddled by his door, tied to a tree, or under a shed near by. If it be an errand of only a few hundred yards, he would disdain to execute it as a pedestrian. Whatever the business be, it must be transacted in the saddle. His wife tells him there is water wanted for some culinary purpose; he springs upon the back of his horse, having first slung a pair of *cantaros*, that balance one another, by a strap over the croup of the saddle. Thus accoutred, he rides to the nearest stream, spurs his animal into it, and wades on till the jars have filled themselves. Then, returning to the hut, he slips out of the saddle, and very often leaves the unloading to be done by his wife, or some other individual of his household. Fire-wood he fetches from the forest in a similar free-and-easy fashion. A log being selected, it is noosed in his *lazo*, and tied to the tail of his horse. The

andante then drags it to the house, and often inside, when it is set free, with one end thrust into the cinders. As the point burns off, it is pushed farther up, till the whole is consumed, and another log is required for similar transport.

In the intervals of his leisure the Jarocho swings in his hammock, usually stretched between two trees, smokes his paper cigarette, and reflects upon the pleasures he has had at the last *fandango*, or more likely those he expects at the *fête* that is to come. Now and then he will take up his *vihuela*, or *jarana* (a small kind of guitar), screw the strings to the proper tension, strum a tune he intends playing at the next meeting with his sweetheart—if a bachelor, and sometimes when a Benedict, for very often he is a sad rake. To give him a better chance of being rewarded by her smiles, he will add the words also, for the Jarocho is not only a poet, but an improvisatore—in short, a sort of Transatlantic troubadour. At other times he may be seen looking after his game cock—since cock-fighting is one of his favourite pastimes—and several champion chanticleers may be found among his live stock, sharing his affections with his dog and his *andante*. He will be seen preparing his lines and nets for the fishery and turtle-taking; his gins and other implements for the chase, the game being the small Mexican deer, the agouti, armadilloes, and iguanas, with partridges, wild turkeys, penelopes, and several species of curassow. He also proves his prowess in the grand chase by attacking the cougar and jaguar, or, as they are called by him, the lion and tiger. When his calling is that of *vaquero*, most of his time is taken up in looking after the herds of cattle and horses that roam over the savannas belonging to the large *haciendas de ganado*, or grazing farms. In this wild pastoral life he takes especial delight. With the

haciendas de labor—the estates where cultivation is carried on—he will have nothing to do. An agricultural life is not congenial to him, as it involves painstaking and systematic toil. He leaves this to the pure-blooded and patient Indian aboriginal "hewer of wood and drawer of water," who breaks the clod at this hour, as in the days of Montezuma. Any farming operations undertaken by the Jarocho are upon the most limited scale, in a style quite primitive. With his *machete* he clears a patch of forest contiguous to his dwelling, not larger than a good-sized garden. He only cuts away the underwood, leaving the larger trees standing; it would be too much exertion to fell one of these. When the lopped saplings become sufficiently desiccated in the sun, he drags them into a heap, and puts the torch to them. Making no attempt to plough up the ground, he does his planting and sowing with a hoe, or the end of a pointed stick. Nature, exuberant around him, completes the cultivation in a few months, or even weeks, rewarding him with a crop. This is of varied kind, commensurate with his wants and wishes. A patch of maize plants to furnish *zacate* for his horse and corn for his *tortillas;* some plantains to be eaten raw, or fried in lard; yams and the manioc root, with onions, garlic, and several species of capsicum, to give savour to his stews of *tasajo*, tomatoes, and *frisoles*. Of fruits he is fond, but these give him no trouble in their production. They grow almost spontaneously around him, and plenteously, as if Pomona herself had spread his table with a dessert, rich and profuse. So numerous are the kinds set before him, it would look too like a catalogue to give but a list of their names. One might suppose that almost every genus in the *Genera Plantarum* had contributed its quota to the Mexican tropical fruit-market.

Thus bountifully provided for, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the Jarocho leads an indolent life; for to this he is prompted both by nature, inclination, and the hot atmosphere he is compelled almost perpetually to breathe.

There are times when he exhibits the very opposite—an extreme activity, coupled with the most passionate excitement. See him on horseback, lazo in hand, winding its noose around his head, or flinging it over the horns of a fierce bull; behold him on the back of an untamed and kicking colt, which he breaks for the saddle; watch him at *fiesta* or *fandango*, when he is himself a spectator of his sweetheart engaged in the dance; note how his eyes sparkle with jealous fire, and his hand nervously clutches the hilt of his ever-ready hanger; follow him through the fray that on such occasions is pretty certain to ensue at the slightest sign either of rivalry or insult; observe him through all these, his pursuits as well as vagaries, and you will with difficulty believe him to be the same individual you saw indolently reclining in his *hamaca*, and seeming too lazy to bestir himself for either business or pleasure.

With some strange, and not altogether creditable, characteristics, the Jarocho is nevertheless a man to be admired. He is proud of his independence, and will fight to preserve it. A word uttered against his good name will provoke him to the drawing of his *cortarné*, and spilling the blood of the slanderer, or getting his own let in return. But the conflict will be carried on in an honourable way—as a duel between gentlemen—and not by the stealthy stab of the assassin, or a clumsy encounter between peasants. Nothing could be farther from a peasant than he. In his mien there is nothing *maladroit*—no taint of clownishness. Despite his patois, his small house, and limited belongings, he is nearer to the

idea of a gentleman. He is honest, true to his word, and faithful in his friendships. It is not out of his ranks that the robbers of Mexico are recruited. On the contrary, some of her truest patriots and best fighting partisans have been Jarochos, as from old experience I had myself reason to know. His quality in this line has been since tasted by French Zouaves and Turcos, to their shameful discomfiture.

A JAROCHO'S OPINION OF THE FRENCH.

As the imperial fiasco had lately failed, it was naturally the subject of converse between my new travelling companion and myself. It came out as we rode onward, being introduced by the Jarocho in a style somewhat *sans façon* as well as startling.

"*Ñor deconocio*," he said, resuming speech after a pause, "you tell me you are going to Santa Fé."

"Santa Fé is my present destination."

"And beyond?"

"Oh, far beyond; perhaps all over Mexico."

The Jarocho rose up in his stirrups, and threw himself into an attitude peculiar to his class—that is, resting upon one leg, and seated sideways in the saddle, leaning a little over.

"*Carrambo!*" he exclaimed, after scanning me from head to foot. "All over Mexico!" Then transferring his gaze to my horse, he continued—"*Muy bien caballero*, that will be a long journey; but your *andante* appears equal to it. I don't think I've seen a handsomer sample of horse-flesh in *tierra caliente*. Would it be impolite of me to inquire where you came across him?"

"In Vera Cruz, of course. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing, ñor. Only when I see a good horse I am curious to know something of his pedigree. Yours is a beauty, and appears worthy of descent from the best mare of Mahomet."

"It is possible he may be so; I purchased him with a warranty of pure Arab blood, and paid price accordingly."

I made these remarks somewhat mechanically, for my thoughts were not about the horse. They were engrossed by the singular individual who was questioning me, and who, while speaking in a pronounced patois, was at the same time costumed like a prince, and carrying himself like a crusader.

Had it been my first visit to his country, I might have been surprised and puzzled. But I was neither. I knew that I was riding alongside a Jarocho. Without making rejoinder to what I had said, he continued to interrogate me, though in a manner at which I could not feel offended.

"Well, caballero," he said, "you don't look much like a pedlar, nor yet the travelling clerk of a *comerciante*. Neither should I take you for a speculator in mines. *Carrambo!* you mystify me, when you talk of going all over Mexico. Still I shall not be so rude as to ask you your reasons; for, although wearing our national costume—which, by the way, well becomes you—I can tell you to be a stranger."

"How so; does my bad Spanish betray me?"

"On the contrary, you talk it too well—too much like a *Gachupino*. And yet you are not that, either."

"*Yo soy Irlandes*."

I have travelled in some countries where it might damage a man to proclaim himself an Irishman; but I knew this did not hold good of Mexico, and therefore can

claim no credit for candour in having made known my nationality.

I could see that it did me no harm in the eyes of my new-made acquaintance. On the contrary, he became more respectfully polite. His politeness seemed to act as a curb on his curiosity, since he made no further attempt to question me as to the motive of my journey. For all this I could see that he was keenly desirous of knowing it. I had no reason to conceal it, and said, "My object in travelling through your country is because I am in love with it. I believe it to be the most beautiful in the world, and wish to make myself better acquainted with it."

"*Gracias, ñor!*" returned the Jarocho, with a bow that would have done credit to a courtier. "I'm glad you have such a good opinion of our poor Mexico, and hope you'll enjoy journeying through it. *Cospita!* It isn't often one meets with a traveller starting on such an extended tour. And you intend making it alone?"

"Not quite alone. I expect to pick up a companion at Santa Fé—a man who is to act in the double capacity of guide and attendant."

"Take my advice, caballero, and choose *un hombre de bien* —one you can trust to be faithful. What with our own misfortunes, and those forced upon us by the foreigner, I'm sorry to say the roads are still far from safe. There's danger in the journey you are undertaking. I hope you will get safely to the end of it. No doubt, before leaving Vera Cruz you burnt a goodly number of candles to our Lady of Guadaloupe."

"Not a wick," was my reply, made laconic, as reproof to the superstition that had often disgusted me.

"You don't believe in that sort of thing, then?" inquired he, with an evident interest.

"Certainly not," I said in answer; "on the contrary, I regard it as the chief curse of your country."

The Jarocho suddenly checked his horse, half turning him across the track, grasping as he did the hilt of the bright-bladed weapon that lay sheathless along the saddle-flap.

"*Ñor deconocio*," he said, whipping it from under his thigh, and handling it carte and tierce, "you see that *cortarné?*"

"Certainly," I stammered out, taken by surprise, and, in the full belief I should have to defend myself, groping for my pistol-holster; "certainly I see it: for what do you put the question?"

"To tell you that I have buried that blade in the breast of more than one Frenchman. And why? Because they came here to fix the curse you speak of more firmly upon us. They came to rivet the chain—*ay Dios!*—tight enough before. But we've broken it, and are free; while they—*bandidos y cobardes* (bandits and cowards)—were but too glad to escape, leaving that poor scapegoat of an emperor to pay the reckoning they had run up. Yes, caballero, it was as I tell you. But for Maximiliano and his Austrians occupying our troops at the capital, the French jackals would never have left Vera Cruz alive. As it was, they took with them but little of the plunder they had collected in the campaign, and less glory. *Sangre de Christo!* what a pity it was to let them escape with whole skins!"

Long before the Jarocho had finished his diatribe, my hand had ceased searching for the butt of my revolver. I was glad that my *serapé*, draping down over the saddle-bow,

concealed the movement. I should have been sorry to show myself suspicious of a man capable of giving expression to such patriotic sentiments. They were not so far different from my own, and I told him so.

The unison of our thoughts seemed to tranquillise the storm that had so suddenly sprung up in his mind, and, replacing the *machete* under his thigh, he rode on calmly as before. I followed, reflecting, and with increased respect for the man so unexpectedly met. I could not help this, in view of his patriotism. As I've said, it was not my first experience of this on the part of his people. I remembered how, twenty years before, under their famed chief Jarauta—the Padre Jarauta—they had held the ground against the Americans in guerilla warfare long after the Mexican regular army had succumbed. I remembered how, at San Juan de Teotihuacan, almost within sight of the famed Aztecan *teocalli*, we had stolen a march on Jarauta and his *guerrilleros*—attacked them just at daybreak, as they were watering their horses, at the town stream, and routed them, shooting down over a hundred of their number with Colt's revolving pistols *—the first time this now famous weapon was ever used in war.*

I did not relate this circumstance to him who was riding by side; but permitted him to continue his conversation about the later invaders of his country; of whom history has yet to give an account that will be far from creditable to them.

A SOUVENIR OF "LEX TALIONIS."

As if to rebuke me for blaming them, almost at that moment came before my eyes an object fraught with painful memory to myself, and something like shame to my own old comrades in arms.

After riding some time under the trees, we had come within sight of an open savanna. I recognised the little prairie of Santa Fé, beyond which lies the *pueblita* of the same name. Standing in the plain, far out from the forest edge, was a solitary *rancho*, or log-house, with an attached shed and *corral* for the enclosing of cattle. This, too, I recognised. It was all classic ground to me, especially that surrounding the lonely cabin. It was not a dwelling, but a slaughter-house—a place for butchering beef to supply the market of Vera Cruz. Once, upon a scouting reconnaissance by moonlight, I remembered crouching up to, and entering it, with the caution observed by scouts. We found the place deserted, abandoned by the butchers; who, in all likelihood, were enrolled in the *guerrilla* against which we were acting. Just outside the enclosure lay a corpse, by the fragments of uniform still adhering to it recognisable as that of an American soldier. Though fearfully disfigured by mutilation—one arm chopped off, and crosses cut in the soles of the feet—there was enough of the face left untouched to enable us to identify a comrade. The eyes were open, with eyeballs protruding, glassy, and glaring upon the moon. It was a sample of the *lex talionis*, and I was acquainted with its first act. The amputated arm was a key to it; and a soldier of my own corps had been the cause. Some days before, a wicked wretch who wore our uniform had discharged his gun at a harmless wood-chopper encountered by the wayside, cutting some sticks from a hedge. The shot was fired in sheer wantonness, as one shoots at a bird one does not care to gather into the game-bag. The bullet broke the man's arm, and amputation became necessary, though this did not save his life. The heartlessness of the deed provoked retalia-

tion, and the corpse we came upon was one of its consequences.

There were other acts of a similar kind during the American-Mexican war; but they were few—might be accounted as nothing, compared with what occurred during the Franco-Austrian occupation. The former, I hesitate not to say, was conducted, on the American side, in a manner never before exemplified by an invading army. It was truly civilised warfare—humane—if such a term may be admitted into the vocabulary of war. The latter was the very opposite, more especially in the campaigns carried on by the French. Indeed, the Austrians acted only in a sort of subsidiary manner, the French commander-in-chief, who drew his inspiration from the Tuileries, being in truth the master of Maximilian; and as such is he to be held accountable, not only for the decree which afterwards cost the unfortunate emperor his life, but for the behaviour of the French troops, who, in their inhuman treatment of the Mexican people—in acts of absolute ferocity—far eclipsed Cortez and his *conquistadores*.

So thought the Jarocho, and said it, and so thought I. To confirm me, I did not stand in need of any fresh information from him. In Vera Cruz, I had heard the same story from Don Hilario, and others—corroborated in all its atrocious details.

A SINGULAR BIRD.

The subject was painful, and I was glad to turn from it to themes of a more pacific character. A slight incident diverted my thoughts, as also those of the Jarocho. A bird sprang up from the path, and with a scream winged its way

along the selvage of the forest. It was just as we caught sight of the savanna. The bird was of large size, and sombre colour, kite-shaped, and sharp-winged, with the flight peculiar to the *Falconidæ*. It was its cry that more particularly drew my attention, as also that of my companion. This was like the dissyllable *hua-co*, several times repeated, quickly and in choking tone—as is sometimes heard from the cuckoo—but ending in a prolonged screech.

"The *pajaro vaquero*" (shepherd-bird), said the Jarocho, pointing to it, as it flew off.

I knew and recognised it, though by a different name. It was the celebrated guaco-bird of South America, made famous by the Spanish botanist, Mutis, in describing the parasitical plant, *Mikania guaco*—one of the most efficient antidotes to the bite of a venomous serpent. The bird itself is a hawk; but instead of preying on other birds, it has a stronger propensity for feeding upon reptiles, and more especially serpents. In America it fills the place occupied by the "secretary bird" in Africa and India, performing the same office—the killing and devouring of snakes. It is not necessary to repeat the tale told by Mutis—of its guarding itself against the effects of a chance bite, by inoculating its blood with the juice of the *Mikania*. Enough to say that I have myself seen sufficient to confirm the truth of the story—strange as it may appear. After all, it is not stranger than the well-known fact of dogs and foxes "going to grass."

"Hear how it screams!" said the Jarocho. "Just as I told you—a sure sign we were to have a *norté*, and you see we have it! I can tell why it cries so," he continued.

"Why?" I asked, my interest in the bird, long ago

begot by reading the description of the Spanish botanist, now vividly reviving; "why?"

"Because the cold of the *norté* sends the snakes into their holes and coverts, where the *vaquero* can't get at them. No wonder it should make lamentation, deprived of its daily and natural food."

I bowed to the explanation of the Jarocho. It was a chapter of natural history that was new to me.

THROUGH THE TROPICAL FOREST.

The road to Santa Fé runs direct across the savanna. Riding ahead of the stranger, I spurred out into the open, and for the first time felt the real chilliness of the norther. As yet there was no rain, but the wind, icy cold, was sweeping along with tempest-strength, carrying with it the leaves and branches of trees plucked off as it passed them. It was with difficulty I could retain my seat in the saddle. Even my horse had a struggle to keep his feet; and quickly wrenching him about, I rode back under the shelter of the forest.

"Follow me!" said the Jarocho, smiling at my discomfiture, and striking off into a side path. "We can get to Santa Fé this way. It will make our journey a little longer, but we shall be less discommoded by the storm; and if the rain should come on, I know a *jacal* where we can get shelter, and pass half an hour agreeably enough, if you are fond of —— say, *ñor*, do you like to look at a pretty girl?"

I could not help smiling at the question so naïvely asked. Both it, and the style in which it was put, were pure Jarocho.

"I fancy there are but few men who would answer you in the negative," was my reply.

VEGETATION ON THE LAGUNA.

"*Bueno!*" he exclaimed, "I thought as much. A man who gives proof of good taste in his horse, as you, caballero, is sure to have an eye for female beauty. You shall see Ña Rafaela and her sister. They are both considered beyond the common, but Rafaelita, ah! she is fair as the *floripundio*."

"I hope she resembles that flower only in the quality of its beauty."

My allusion was to the dangerous properties of the *Datura grandiflora*—the *floripundio* of my fellow-traveller's comparison.

It was at once understood by him; and I fancied that some reflection gave him pain. If so, he made an effort to conceal it, saying in rejoinder, "Ña Rafaela is an angel, pure as the snow of Orizava."

After this we were silent, riding on through the thick of the forest. Indeed for a time conversation would have been difficult, as the path no longer permitted our going abreast. There was scant breadth for a single horseman, the branches brushing against our limbs, as we squeezed through between trees loaded with parasitical plants. Here and there we had to duck our heads to avoid the overarching boughs, with their thick festoonery of epiphytes—especially when the *Dolichos pruriens* flung its stinging garlands across the path. We had to avoid also beautiful, but burning, *Jatrophas* of two distinct species, as also the poisonous sumach (*Rhus radicans*), and other noxious plants, that formed the woof of the grand vegetable web spreading on both sides of us. Above too; for we were no longer travelling with the blue sky overhead, but under a canopy of verdure—a true forest arcade—at all times shady, but now unusually obscured by the norther.

Despite the sombre light, I could distinguish many fair vegetable forms: among them slender *Cæsalpinias* shooting up through the green clustering curtains, with here and there the straight stem of a palm-tree, or *Cecropia*, like rods intended to support them; while pendant pinnatifid leaves of bright yellowish-green proclaimed the *Leguminoseæ* in countless genera and species—in trees as *Robinia* and *Tamarindus*—in parasites as the *Ingas* and *Bauhinias*.

Magnificent *Orchidæ* touched our cheeks—in flower, though it was midwinter in northern climes—several *Epidendreæ*, among them the splendid *Epidendrum Cavendishii*—their fragrance, along with the chill breath of the *norté*, for the time rendering imperceptible the mephitic odour of the skunk, which too often pervades the forests of the Vera Cruz coast-land.

For a full half-hour I followed my Jarocho guide, under the archway of sombre green. Our progress was slow, impeded by water "splashes" that here and there crossed the path. In the coast-lands of Vera Cruz, there is much stagnant water; slow-flowing rivulets, with here and there a *laguna*. The Gulf Stream will account for this sluggishness on the part of the outflowing rivers. By opposing to their efflux the barrier of sand-dunes, already spoken of, it causes them to espouse the ocean with reluctance. Here and there they break through it, as at Antigua, the Boco del Rio of Jamapa, and the Gulf or Lake of Alvarado; but elsewhere they meet obstruction, and crawl slowly along, creating in their track a belt of beautiful vegetation—beautiful to the eye, but dangerous to the health, and too often deadly.

Man alone seems to suffer from this exuberance. To

the animal world, as to the vegetable, it appears congenial. I could not help thinking so, as our path, debouching from the thicket of leafy shrubs, trended for a time along the edge of a lagoon. A stream ran through it, but so slowly that the water was well-nigh stagnant. Broad green leaves lay spread upon its surface, among which, by their heart-shaped and azure-blue flowers, I could distinguish the *Pontederia cordata*, and nearer to the shore the grand blades of the *Pothos*, and several species of *Aroideæ*, whose shining velvety surface contrasted with the rough dark tree-trunks rising beyond, and the still darker forest aisles, over which the trailing epiphytes formed a screen, at all times impenetrable to the sun.

Regardless of the norther, which only raged high above their heads, water and wading birds were disporting themselves in the lagoon, or standing meditative on its shores. Solemn-looking cranes, and the grave *Tantalus loculator*, which the storm had for a time silenced, were seen perched upon projecting logs; while the scarlet ibis, snow-white herons, roseate spoonbills, and turquoise-coloured kingfishers moved over the water-surface like meteors, mingling their varied hues with the azure blossoms of the lilies and the brilliant green leaves of the arums. Overhead sat the osprey, now and then uttering his shrill predatory cry, watching some bird, better fisher than himself, with the design to rob it of its prey; while over the cordate discs of the water-lilies lightly tripped that singular creature, the spur-winged *jacana*, now with plumes spread to support it, like some fine lady in quadrille or minuet; anon, with wings closed, when confident in the support of the lily underneath; but continually scrutinising the water, lest the jaws of an alligator might be gaping too near.

The hideous saurian himself might be seen cunningly concealed under the same lily leaves, winking his great watery eyes while awaiting his prey. It does not matter to him whether it be a scaly fish or a bird of bright plumage. If the sombre-coloured osprey or the sky-blue kingfisher, mistaking him for a log or floating tree, darts down to seize some of the finny tribe swimming contiguous to his teeth, they will run great risk of being themselves made captive, and crushed between his capacious jaws. It was such a tableau as can be witnessed only in the tropical forest—a tableau of wild luxuriant nature, both in the animal and vegetable world. It was many years since I had looked on the like, and I could have long lingered in contemplation. But my companion was impatient, and as he was now also my guide, I was forced to follow him.

We must have ridden for more than an hour through the thick timber, and I was beginning to wonder at the length of the road. The direct one to Santa Fé could not have been half the distance we had traversed since leaving the savanna. I might have suspected my companion of some sinister design, and that instead of an interview with the beautiful Ña Rafaelita and her almost equally beautiful sister, I should find myself in the midst of a *gavilla* of *salteadores*. But I knew it was not the neighbourhood for highway robbers. My travelling companion might be a *contrabandista*, but that could give me no fear. There was a loyal look about him that checked all tendency to apprehension. I only wondered why he was taking me so much out of the way.

When I saw Ña Rafaela and her sister—which I soon after did—my wondering came to an end. The sight of either was worth the roundabout ride.

ÑA RAFAELITA.

SUNSHINE AFTER SHADOW.

While we were riding through the forest, the *norté*, as it sometimes does, had suddenly ceased, or perhaps passed off seaward. Its edge is sometimes sharply defined, as that of cyclone, typhoon, or tornado. We had ridden out of it, and back again into bright sunshine, leaving both the clouded sky and forest shadows behind us. The dwelling of Ña Rafaela's father stood in the open savanna, close by the timber's edge; but before reaching it we came upon a portion of the family—the younger members of it—passing the time *al fresco*, after the true *far niente* fashion of the tropics.

So far from the Jarocho having exaggerated the charms of Ña Rafaela and her sister, he had rather underrated them. Neither the symbol of the *floripundio*, nor any other blossom of the tropical flora, could flatter such beauty as theirs.

In all there was a family of five—father, mother, the two sisters, and a boy-brother. Like my fellow-traveller, they were of the pure Jarocho race, with all its gypsy characteristics. The attitude in which I first saw the family group forcibly recalled the *gitanos*.

The girls were dressed in white cotton garments, that hung loosely around them. It was rather a *deshabille* befitting the hot weather. For all this they did not start at the sight of strangers, but received us with as much grace as would a fine lady in her drawing-room, and with equal *insouciance*.

I could very easily perceive that my companion wished to have a word with Ña Rafaela; and in gratitude for his

having guided me I gave him the chance—by preceding him towards the house in the company of her brother and sister.

Chancing to look back, I saw something like a piece of paper slipped into Rafaela's hand; perhaps a *billet-doux;* and it might be in verse—for the Jarocho is a born poet.

The father and mother, who had gone out for a stroll, seeing us, turned back, and we became the recipients of their hospitality. We were asked to eat, and the girls made a show of setting about the baking of *tortillas;* but Don Hermengildo—I had ascertained this grand name to be that of my fellow-traveller—declined eating, on the plea that we were pressed for time. He had transacted his little affair, whatever it was, with Rafaelita, and did not desire to stay longer by her side.

We did not refuse a *copita* of Catalan brandy, after drinking which, we lighted our *cigarritos*, remounted, and rode out upon the savanna.

While taking the stirrup-cup I noticed that Ña Rafaela was missing from the family group. She had gone away from the house carrying a vessel of crockery-ware upon her head, as if on some domestic errand. She had so managed it that we passed her on the way, my companion once more exchanging a whispered salutation. She was dressed as when first seen, but with the dress differently draped; while around her neck was a string of amber beads I had not noticed before. They looked as if freshly taken out of their case. Perhaps it was this Don Hermengildo had given her, instead of a *carlita.*

As she stopped to bid *adios* on our passing her, I thought that the *pose* was perfect, as also the figure of the girl. Both were classic as Athens itself could have produced

in its palmiest days; and I could not help thinking that a sculptor or painter would have given much for such a model. It was easy to tell that my companion would have almost given his life to be assured in the possession of her heart; but not so easy to say whether he had secured it. As the whisper passed between them at parting, the glance of her eye spoke something like gratitude—perhaps for the amber beads. It was too like gratitude; and, as we rode away, I could not help fancying that in Ñ̃a Rafaela there was something of the nature of the flower to which her lover had compared her, the *datura*—something to be dreaded.

A like fancy appeared to have taken possession of my fellow-traveller, causing him dejection. After a time, however, he rallied, breaking the silence that had succeeded the leave-taking with his sweetheart.

"*Alabo a Dios!*" he said. "What a lucky thing the *norté* has passed off so soon. It would have spoiled everything, had it lasted till to morrow."

"Spoiled what?" I asked.

"What!" exclaimed the Jarocho, repeating the word with a look of astonishment. "Surely, *ñor*, you know that to-morrow there's a *fiesta* at Cacahuatl; the grandest they've had this year. There's to be a *coleo de toros*, and no end of cocks to be fought. After that, in the evening, a *fandango*. Rafaelita and her sister will be there. While about it, let me confess the truth: it was to see them, not to escape the *norté*, I brought you so far out of your way. In return for thus misleading you, may I ask you to accept my hospitality—if you are not sure of a better shelter? The *meson* at Santa Fé is but a poor one. So too is my humble *jacal;* though I can promise you plenty to eat, and a welcome."

I might have refused the offer thus courteously extended, and perhaps would have done so, had it not been to my mind. But it was, perfectly and pointedly—in short, the very thing I was in search of: information connected with the habits and customs of the country—spiced with a dash of adventure. Here were both to be offered to me, in their purest and most characteristic types. A *fiesta*, with its varied sports—embracing a number of the nation's pastimes, and exhibiting its costumes—to say nothing of once more beholding Ña Rafaela! Need I say that I accepted the invitation of the Jarocho?

A TOWN TAKING SIESTA.

Another half-hour's ride brought us within sight of Santa Fé. Don Hermengildo did not live in the village, but some distance beyond. His *jacal*, as he informed me, stood solitary in the forest, a mile or more from the public road. "*En el monté*" were his words. As there was no mountain near, I might have been puzzled by the phrase, and fancied there was still a long ride before us. But I understood the misnomer peculiar to Spanish America, and that *monté* is a forest, and not a mountain! Misled by the name, geographers have placed mountain ranges upon their maps, where there is only tree-covered champaign. The great timbered tract of the Amazonian valley is known to the dwellers upon the Andes as *La Montaña;* while those mountains themselves are called *sierras* and *cordilleras*.

As we passed through the *pueblita* it was early afternoon. This being the hour of siesta not a soul was stirring in the streets. The sun was clear again, and scorchingly hot. Pariah-looking dogs lay panting in the shadow of walls; and black vultures (*Cathartes atratus*) sat perched upon parapets,

holding their wings wide open, to catch whatever coolness might be wafted towards them by the slightly stirring air.

The atmosphere seems hotter after a *norté* than before it. Perhaps it is our sensations that deceive us, contradicting the thermometer. It is as when one ceases fanning oneself. An Anglo-Indian in the act of being cooled by the punkah, when the servant pulling the rope has been suddenly called off, will comprehend this.

An odd villager here and there seated by his door, or suspended in a hammock, with a group in front of what appeared to be the principal *tienda*, or shop, of the place, were all the *Santa Féanos* to be seen. Two or three horses, carrying the huge Mexican high tree-saddle, with its carved wooden stirrups and stamped leather furnishings, stood near. The saddles were empty, but in the group by the shop door were men with heavy spurs on their heels, showing to whom the horses appertained. One of these, like my travelling companion, wore the *manga*—only that his was of bright sky-blue colour, whereas that of Don Hermengildo was purple. The others had *serapés*.

THE SERAPÉ, FREZADA, PONCHO, COBIJA, AND MANGA.

It may be worth while to say a word about the several kinds of garments—one or more of them peculiar to all parts of Spanish America. The *serapé* has been described by almost every traveller in Mexico; the *manga* only mentioned. The former is seen everywhere; the latter only on rare occasions. Whether in the hot *tierra caliente*, the cooler region of the *tierra templada*, or the still colder clime of the *tierra fria*, there is no Mexican so poor as not to be possessed of a *serapé*, and none so rich as to disdain wear-

ing this truly national article of dress. The city merchant may lounge about the streets in his *capa*, which is simply a broadcloth cloak; but whenever he makes a journey into the country he must needs avail himself of the more convenient *serapé*. His wardrobe would not be complete without one. The wealthy *haciendado* usually rides about with it, either hanging over his shoulders, or strapped to the croup of his saddle; while the *ranchero* is never seen without a *serapé*. Even the *lepero*—the lazzarone of the towns—is possessed of one, or its coarser representative the *frezada*. To the others it is only a cloak or overcoat; to him it is coat, jacket, even shirt, for the *lepero* may be frequently observed without the under garment.

The *serapé* is made of a quality and at a price to suit all ranks of wearers. The cheaper kind, called *frezada*, can be purchased for less than ten shillings; while a first-class *serapé* of Saltillo or San Miguel del Grande—the places most noted for the manufacture—will cost twenty-five guineas! An unpractised eye, viewing both from a distance, would see little difference between them. Both are about the size and shape of an ordinary blanket, or à dining-table intended for six persons. They are woven of wool, usually of a white ground, with patterns of red, black, blue, yellow, and green. These differ in design, though there is a general resemblance in all. In fact, there is an idiosyncrasy in the patterns of the *serapé*. They are not flowers, nor yet checks, nor exactly of a striped arrangement, though uniform parallel bands of colour may be seen in certain districts, as in the *serapé* of the Navajo Indians—a prized and costly kind. The pattern-work most in vogue bears some resemblance to the bordering known as *grecque;* though differing from this by the lines of colour meeting each other at acute instead of right

angles. Any one who has noticed the zigzag ornamentation on old Mexican pottery—the lost art of the Aztecs—will have a clear comprehension of the designs usually seen upon a modern Mexican *serapé*. Both have evidently sprung from the same mental fount, and are the product of the same intellectual process. Clearly the *serapé* is not Spanish, but Aztecan—perhaps Toltecan.

Every one who has read a book of Mexican travels knows that the *serapé* has a slit in the centre, through which the head is passed, leaving the garment to drape down over the shoulders, loosely like a cape, and so protecting the person from rain. The rain is thrown off even by the cheaper sorts, unless under a long-continued pour; but the costlier kinds are woven waterproof—as cloth of caoutchouc preparation for example.

The *manga* differs from any kind of *serapé*. It is made of broadcloth, very fine, and uniform in colour—which is sometimes of the gayest, as sky-blue, scarlet, and purple. Its shape is a circle, with an embroidery of silk braid, velvet, gold cord, or lace, around the central slit through which the head is passed. The broidered work of itself forms an inner circle, usually extending to the turn of the shoulders.

The *manga* is one of the most beautiful, as also the most graceful, of garments; and a Mexican cavalier with one over his shoulders, and otherwise dressed to correspond, presents a costume picture not easily matched. When one side is thrown up towards the throat, so as to give freedom to the arm, and the skirt falls low on the opposite side, the draping is as graceful as that of a Roman toga.

The *poncho* of South America differs from the Mexican *serapé*, both in texture and arrangement of colours; and it may be further stated that the garment of this name worn

by the Guacho of the *pampas* has some points of dissimilarity to that which covers the shoulders of the Chilian "Guaso." The central slit in the Guacho blanket is diagonal to the line of the sides, while that of the Guaso, as also the Mexican *serapé*, is parallel—of course causing a different arrangement in the hang of the edges and angles. The *cobija* worn by the Venezuelans is another kind of poncho.

THE GLANCE OF THE "GREEN-EYED MONSTER."

My companion in passing the group of idlers was saluted by all, except the man in the sky-blue *manga*. I might have supposed him unacquainted with the latter, but for an exchanged glance which told that they knew one another, and still more, that there was some unpleasantness between them. A thought came uppermost in my mind—a beautiful face was recalled—that of Ña Rafaela; might it be the cause?

"Who is he with the sky-blue *manga?*" I inquired, as we rode onward.

"His name is Valdez."

The Jarocho gave the reply with a gruff curtness, as if not over-satisfied at my taking notice of this individual.

"Valdez," I said, remembering this to be the name of the guide recommended by Don Hilario. "Might it be the Señor Joaquin Valdez?" I inquired farther.

"A *lepero* like that to be styled señor, would be doing him too much honour. His name is Joaquin Valdez."

"In that case," I said, without heeding the remark, evidently made in bitterness, "he must be the very man I am in search of. Is there any other of the name around here?"

"Not that I know of."

I drew bridle, half resolved to go back and make Joaquin Valdez acquainted with my intentions towards him. I had a letter to him from Don Hilario, of whom he was a sort of retainer—being a *vaquero* on my friend's estate—a large *ganaderia*, or cattle-run. The letter contained directions—almost in the shape of commands—for Valdez to act as my guide and travelling attendant so far, and for so long, as I might wish to avail myself of his services.

I was hesitating whether to return and perfect the engagement, or leave it till I had fulfilled that entered into with Don Hermengildo.

Six words from the Jarocho decided me. They were in the shape of a proverb—a mode of expressing thought common to the people of Spain, and equally so to their Mexican descendants. "*Caballero, un clavo saca otro clavo*" (one nail drives out another), he said, significantly adding, "*Una hora un amigo; otra otro*" (one friend at a time).

I understood the application, once more loosened rein, and rode on by the side of Don Hermengildo—leaving Valdez to be looked up at a later time.

"No doubt you'll see him at Cacahuatl to-morrow," continued the Jarocho. "Whether he be able to accompany you *all over Mexico*, is not so certain. That will depend upon circumstances."

"He may be otherwise engaged?"

"*Quien sabe?*"

This phrase, as well as the tone in which it was spoken, told that my travelling companion desired to close the conversation—at least, upon the subject of Señor Valdez. The man in the sky-blue manga was evidently his *bête noir;* and it was almost equally evident that the green-eyed monster was at the bottom of the business.

TWO CLASSES OF HUMMING-BIRDS.

I forbore pressing for an explanation; any curiosity I had upon the subject was likely to be satisfied at the *fiesta* of Cacahuatl. Till then I could well wait, surrounded by sublime scenes of nature, and in the contemplation of pictures that were sufficient to enchain and absorb the attention of the most indifferent traveller. The scenes were continually changing, while vying with each other in grandeur and beauty.

Soon after leaving Santa Fé we parted from the public road, and once more plunged into the tropical forest. We were again under the shadow of luxuriant vegetation; the path at times completely arched over by creeping plants, and only passable where the *machete* had been at work to clear space sufficient for a single horseman. Beyond the edges of this vegetable arcade, the parasites formed an impenetrable trellis-work, where only lizards, serpents, or small quadrupeds like the *zorrilla*, could crawl through. Even the large Mexican wolf is here compelled to keep along the trails made by tapirs, or straying cattle.

Sometimes the creeping plants trended horizontally from tree to tree; at times killing the standards that supported them, as if jealous of other foliage spreading above, and spiteful at its having hindered them from receiving the free full kiss of the sunlight. Masses of *Paullinias* and *Aristolochias* were thus arranged; and where the sun poured down upon them I observed swarms of humming-birds flitting about or poised on whirring wings in front of their flowers. Although otherwise ignorant enough about matters of Mexican natural history, my companion was wonderfully

observant. In a conversation about these birds he told me, in his own peculiar way, that there are two very distinct classes of them—distinct in regard to their food, as well as general habits; one frequenting foliage, the other seeking its food in flowers. It was but a confirmation of the interesting fact discovered and first made known to science by Mr. Bates, in his charming work, "The Naturalist on the Amazons"—a work which for scientific research, I here claim permission to say, is not surpassed by any other, and only equalled by the "South American Journey" of Humboldt and the "Naturalist's Voyage" of Darwin.

A FRIAR IN THE FOREST.

Speaking lately of costumes, I soon after saw one again reminding me that I was in Mexico. It was that of a monk, the wearer himself suddenly becoming disclosed to our view, as we came out into a glade or open space in the forest. With a background of broad-leaved vegetation —there were palms and plantains before our eyes—the apparition was as singular as unexpected; for it is not often that the gentry with cowl and shaven crown are seen in the tropical coast-land. They affect rather the higher and healthier region of the *tierra templada*, where the climate is more congenial to personal comfort, and the larger cities offer a better opportunity to practise their peculiar craft and calling.

I was the more surprised at the presence of this solitary specimen of the brotherhood, on perceiving a little hut in the background, which had all the appearance of being his place of abode.

My travelling companion gave me a clue to the enigma

by saying that Fray Manuel, as he called the monk, was a sort of eccentric character, who had strayed from some monastery in one of the great cities of the interior, and taken up his abode *en el monté*, where we saw him. He lived in the little hovel which he had himself constructed, hermit fashion, though occasionally paying a visit to the *ranchos* around, and at times extending his peregrinations as far as Vera Cruz. He belonged to the order of San Diego (that I could tell from the texture and colour of his cloth—a coarse brown woollen stuff), and was reputed very pious.

Don Hermengildo was not so certain about this. He had several times met the monk at the domicile of Ña Rafaela's father, and believed him to be something of a cheat; "*un picaro*" was the expression. The Jarochos are less under hierarchical influence than most others of the lower orders of Mexico; and he with whom I had just made acquaintance seemed to care not a fig for friar or priest.

Notwithstanding, he took off his hat to the *padre;* who as we passed him, gave his benediction, with the customary parting speech:—"*Va con Dios.*"

A "JACAL" AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

Leaving the hermit monk behind, I soon ceased to think of him. The splendid scenes once more claimed my attention. Nature—beautiful Nature—far more beautiful than art—lovelier even than woman—that is, to the philosophic mind—she was before my eyes, spreading her treasures around me. Like one who, after a long absence in foreign lands, again revisits home, I was charmed with

FRAY MANUEL.

everything I saw—the birds, the leaves, the flowers. Only the order was reversed. In my own land, annually chilled by boreal blasts, all these were comparatively of sombre colour and meagre outline. Here, in the torrid *tierra caliente* of Mexico, all was bright, broad, magnificently expanded. The very weeds were showy flowers; and where man had made his mark, in the shape of a slight industry, cultivation seemed only intended for ornament.

The dwelling of the Jarocho, which soon after came in sight, was itself something to challenge scrutiny and cause pleasurable wonder. Though only a humble *jacal*, it and its surroundings would have gladdened the eye and heart of a scene-painter—one given to the limning of tropical landscapes. The background was a forest in which fig-trees predominated, their smooth glossy leaves presenting that stellated arrangement peculiar to the tribe, as also to tropical vegetation. Mingled with these were other arborescent forms, with foliage green, golden, or glaucous. A botanist, wedded to his special proclivity—and what botanist is not?—would have gazed long and lovingly on the smooth silvery trunks and peltate leaves of the *Cecropias*, the pinnate foliage of the *Ingas* with other leguminous trees, and the fan-like, or feather-like, fronds of the palms—for there were both kinds within view—their tufted crowns supported upon slender cylindrical stems, that towered above the spray of the surrounding forest.

In front and around the dwelling were plants and trees of those kinds cultivated within the tropics; conspicuously the *Musas* (banana and plantain), with their glossy leaves of light yellowish green, full twenty feet in length, by thirty inches in breadth; the maniocs (*Jatropha manihot* and *utilissima*), with their radiating leaf-crowns; several fruit-

trees of the family *Zapotado;* others of the orange tribe; and in a spot of garden ground under the shade of these arborescent forms, the pineapple (*Bromelia ananas*), with many staple articles of the Mexican *cuisine*—the sweet potato (*Batatas edulis*), the tomato (*Solanum esculentum*), frijoles (*Phaseolus Hernandezii*), and several species of chili (*Capsicum annuum*); while an attached enclosure of some acres in extent, bristling with beautiful maize plants, told that Don Hermengildo grew sufficient corn for feeding his horse, and keeping his house in *atolé*, *tamalé*, and *tortillas*.

It was a picture of tropical plenty, requiring but slight care or trouble to produce. As it first broke upon the view I instinctively checked my horse, and sat in the saddle surveying it. My host, without knowing what had caused me to stop, nevertheless courteously awaited my advance, saying not a word.

It was the house itself that chiefly claimed my attention. I had seen such before—more or less perfect in kind and construction. That of Don Hermengildo was a type of the country cottage—indifferently called *rancho*, *ranchito*, or *jacal*—to be met with in the hot lowlands of Mexico.

A gigantic birdcage of peeled osier rods, with the reeds set rather closely together, will give some idea of the structure. The corner posts were smooth trunks of the *corozo* palm (*Cocos butyracea*), one of the most beautiful of the *Palmaceæ*, from whose nuts, of the size of pool-balls, a fine oil is extracted. Cross beams of the same united these uprights, also forming rafters for the roof, which was high-pitched, and thatched with the fan-shaped fronds of another palm, laid on so as to shed the rain like slates or shingles. The walls were of the *caña vaquera*, a species of *Bambusa*,

BLOSSOM OF THE BROMELIA.

which grows plentifully in the lowlands of Mexico, its stems shooting up to a height of fifty or sixty feet. These cut to the proper length, and set closely together, stockade-fashion, constituted the walls. The door, swinging on hide hinges, was of split cane; while windows were not needed, the interstices between the stems giving all the light required within the dwelling. The sun was shaded off by the projection of the roof; while to keep out cold—a rare requirement in the tropics—a thin matting of plaited palm-leaf, rolled up like a window-blind under the eaves, could be let down all around the house. This is done when rain-storms strike slantingly, more especially during a *norté;* for then the interior requires protection from dust, as well as cold.

A JAROCHO AT HOME.

As we approached the *jacal* of Don Hermengildo, the palm curtain was rolled up, and I could see several forms moving about inside the dwelling, like birds within their cage. Two of them were pretty birds, although neither so prepossessing as Ña Rafaela. They were the sisters of my host; while a third individual, also of the feminine gender, was his mother.

If the Jarochos have Moorish blood in their veins, their manners are not altogether of Morocco, and I was at once introduced to the intimacy of the family circle.

As we entered the house, the two younger women had their *rebosos* over their heads, and half *tapado*—that is, half concealing their faces. As soon as it became known that I was their brother's invited guest, the scarf was permitted to drop down to their shoulders, and their faces beamed with the bright smiles of a free and friendly hospitality.

"*Andate, niñas!*" cried the Jarocho. "Quick, get us something to eat; the caballero is half famished."

The *niñas* threw off their scarf *impedimenta*, and passing through a back door that led to a sort of kitchen, commenced culinary operations, while their mother remained to set out the table. Two or three broad green leaves freshly chopped from one of the plantain-trees growing near, were placed side by side on a rude slab table—making a spread that looked both clean and cool. The plates, cups, and dishes consisted of carved cocoa-nut shells, and calabashes of various shapes and dimensions. There were neither knives, forks, nor spoons—these being almost unknown to the cottage *ménage* of Mexico.

Three or four trestle-fashioned chairs, with cow-hide seats, were the only other articles of furniture in the *jacal*. On the walls were some small pictures, that of Santa Guadalupe, the patroness saint of Mexico, being most conspicuous.

There were two apartments in the dwelling; and a glance into the inner one disclosed the beds belonging to the female occupants. They were bedsteads rather than beds; a mere *grille* of bamboo canes set upon short foot-posts, with a piece of palm matting—*petaté*—to serve for palliasse, mattress, and everything; while a cotton sheet upon each was all of bed-clothing required in the climate of the *tierra caliente*.

While my host went out to look after the horses, I was made free to inspect the interior of his house—even to its kitchen. The girls good-naturedly allowed me to be a witness of their culinary skill, their brother telling them that I was a traveller desirous of familiarising myself with the customs of their country.

THE "COCINA MEXICANA."

While the national bread was being baked, another item of the Mexican *cocina*, equally national, was observed simmering on the fire. This was a stew of brown beans—*frijoles*—without which no dinner is eaten in Mexico. They are first boiled, and then fried in lard, with a seasoning of onions—perhaps a little garlic and *chilé*. In the higher region of the table-lands the juice of the *maguey* plant—*pulque*—is the daily, almost hourly, drink; and this cool sparkling beverage is a fine antidote to the burning bite of the capsicums. In the *tierra caliente* there is no *pulque;* but its place is well supplied by the sap of another tree—a palm of the genus *Acrocomia*—having the taste, bouquet, and other good qualities of new-made wine. To obtain it, the tree is cut down, a trough hollowed out in its trunk, into which the sap gradually oozes, until there is sufficient of it for the dinner-table, or, if need be, for a grand carousal. When drawn off, the trough soon refills; and the supply is thus renewed for several weeks before becoming exhausted.

My host returning into the house, brought along with him a *cantaro* of this splendid tipple, inviting me to partake. It was, as he informed me, in the right condition—the tree having been cut down and "tapped" the day before. I could believe him. It had all the coolness and effervescence of champagne, and tasted much better than that we are accustomed to drink in our English hotels—to say nothing of some private houses.

In fine, our dinner consisted of a stew of *tasajo*, or jerked beef, pungent with *chlié;* the aforesaid *frijoles*,

similarly spiced; some ears of young maize corn roasted in the husk under ashes of a wood fire; sweet potatoes; and the never absent *tortillas*.

After the dinner came a dessert such as Lucullus might have coveted. Pomona never spread such a plenty on the banks of the Tiber. Surely the gardens of the Hesperides must have been in New Spain?

THE VOICES OF THE TROPICAL FOREST.

I passed the night in a hammock swung inside the *jacal*. My host slept upon a *petaté*, laid upon the floor, the females of the family occupying the inner apartment.

The *petaté* is seen everywhere in the houses of the poor. It is a palm-leaf mat, of about six feet in length by four or five in breadth. On the higher plateaux, where there are lakes that produce the *tula*, or bulrush—as in the valleys of Mexico and Toluca—*petatés* are made of this material. By day they serve as carpets and chairs, the feminine members of the household sitting, or rather "squatting," upon them when engaged in sewing, knitting, or other domestic duties. By night the *petaté* becomes a bed, and is often the only thing of the kind used in a Mexican cottage. Usually there is a raised bank, or platform, upon which the *petaté* is spread, though not always, the hard earthen floor being often deemed sufficient. In the *tierra caliente* the platform is a staging of bamboos, the stems split and laid parallel upon a frame with short feet. The elasticity of the cane, and the coolness imparted by the free circulation of air between the slats, make this a suitable kind of couch for the natives.

The hammock, however, is the correct thing in a hot climate; and to one accustomed to it a bedstead appears but a clumsy contrivance. In the hammock you are less exposed to being crawled over by insects and *reptilia;* though a scorpion, centipede, or climbing snake may sometimes drop into it from the thatch above. Lizards, too, can go anywhere, along a joist or ceiling, back downward.

When encamped in the desert Isle of Lobos, off Tuxpan, I remember one of these reptiles taking its station inside my hut, just under the ridge-pole, with its back downward, and neck slightly craned to one side. As it was a beautiful *Anolius* I did not disturb it, and it remained three whole days and nights, not only in the same position, but without in the least changing the attitude it had assumed. During all that time—and I was most of it inside my tent—I did not observe the slightest movement either of limbs or body. It was finally removed by a brother officer who was a keen herpetologist. I could then understand the popular belief as to the chameleon living upon air.

The voices of the tropical forest awakened me at the earliest hour of dawn. Coming freely through the interstices of the eaves, along with the first rays of Aurora, they fell upon my ear as if I had been sleeping *sub Jove.* It was on the whole not an unpleasing chorus—shrill cries mingled with sweet warblings. I could distinguish the jabbering of parrots and the cackling of the penelope. This is the loudest and most discordant note heard in the tropical forest, at times resembling the cry of some one in mortal agony. Its usual call is represented by the name which the natives have given to the bird. It is allied to the curassow birds, belonging to the order of the *Gallinaceæ,* and family *Cracidæ,*

of which there are several genera and species but little known to naturalists.

Taking part in the sylvan concert were jays and cardinals, whose harsh cries were but half-neutralised by the softer voices of the *Fringellidæ* and warblers. Afar off I could hear the lugubrious wail of the *Aluates* or howling monkeys—the red species (*ursinus ?*) being common enough in the Vera Cruz coast-land. Several times during the night a wolf had bayed the moon close to my sleeping quarters. It was the large Mexican variety—a formidable creature, very different from the *coyoté*, or jackal, and dreaded by the *ganaderos*, especially in calf-time. Once the midnight stillness was interrupted by a sound that interested me more than all. It was that of the tiger (*tigré*), for by this misnomer is the jaguar (*Felis onça*) known throughout Spanish America, the puma, or couguar, being equally misnamed lion (*leon*). Don Hermengildo told me that neither was common around his habitation, though occasionally met with. Several spotted and yellow skins hanging against the wall, with others converted into articles of furniture, proved the truth of at least the latter part of his statement.

We sprang from our hammocks, and were out at first glimpse of daylight. The early matutinal hour is that most enjoyable in that torrid zone. Then the atmosphere is delightfully cool, and the tropical flora gives out its sweetest fragrance. Fortunate if the *zorilla*, or skunk (*Mephitis Americana*), has not been straying near, and engaging in combat with some enemy. If it has, there will be no balm upon the breeze, but instead an odour almost unendurable.

"DESAYUNO Y ALMUERZO."

The girls were up before us, and occupied in the *cocina*, from which soon came forth the fruit of their first culinary labour. It was chocolate, served in a little urn-shaped cup of red earthenware—the liquid thick and frothing—the froth produced by a "whisk" similar to that used in making light creams or "trifles." This, with a piece of biscuit or sponge-cake, is the universal *desayuno* (*déjeûner*) of the Mexicans, taken at the moment of getting out of bed. The *almuerzo*, or breakfast, is a very different affair, and served at a later hour—usually about eleven o'clock. It is a substantial meal, with eggs, meats, and wine—in short, a *déjeûner à la fourchette*. As we intended making a well-timed start, we had breakfast at an earlier hour, the eggs being those of the iguana; the meats, a steak taken from the ribs of the same reptile; with some stewed tasajo, frijoles, and hot tortillas; while the wine was again the delicious juice of the *Acrocomia* palm.

After breakfast we set out for Cacahuatl, my host having already looked to the grooming and saddling of our horses. His sisters seemed as if they would have liked to go also. What Mexican *muchacha* can resist the attractions of a *fiesta?* But Don Hermengildo discouraged them by pointing out the distance to Cacahuatl—over ten miles. He did not think it too far for Ña Rafaela; I noticed that he said nothing to his sisters about her going.

He was habited in his best habiliments—the complete costume of a Jarocho, shining in all the splendour of purple and gold. His horse was alike richly caparisoned, both saddle and bridle ornamented with silver studs, tags,

and tassels. His *cortarné*, lying along the saddle-flap, had received a fresh sharpening. Something he said led me to the belief that before the *fiesta* was over its bright blade might be dimmed with blood.

A RUSTIC BALLROOM.

We reached Cacahuatl a little after the hour of noon. All around were *ventorillos*, or booths, where drinks were dealt out to those who had the coin to pay for them—*chia* water, orangeade, and *tapichi* (a fermented liquor made from the juice of the pineapple), with several other beverages. There were also French and Catalonian brandies—the latter a clear liquid resembling whisky, common in the towns of Mexico. Some of the *ventorillos*, or drinking-stalls, were tasty affairs, and curious in the eyes of a traveller. They were little enclosures of four or five feet diameter, made of fine soft sand, banked up and wetted to keep it in place. The surface of the sand was covered and completely hidden with green leaves and flowers, arranged in varied pattern-work, as stars, crosses, and crescents—the whole being kept cool and fresh by occasional sprinkling from the water-can. Inside stands the dispenser of the drinks—often a young and very pretty girl, surrounded by her *cantaros* and painted calabashes, while her smiles, directed upon the passer-by, are designed to tempt him to the tasting of some beverage, which not unfrequently she also recommends with most beguiling speeches.

The most remarkable structure was one standing in the centre of the plaza, which, from fresh work, I could see was recently erected, while its frailty told that it was intended to be temporary—in fact, only for the *fiesta*. It was simply a

shed, or canopy, with a horizontal roof supported upon uprights set at equal distances apart. These were the trunks of palm-trees, their smooth, straight columns being entwined with garlands of flowers strung upon *sipos*, or forest creepers, while festoons of the same were suspended from one to the other. The roof was covered in with the broad green leaves of the banana, laid on sufficiently thick to exclude every ray of the sun, while the absence of walls permitted the breeze to circulate freely through the space underneath. Inside, a portion of the floor—its central part —was of earth trodden smooth, and raised several inches above the surrounding level. It was carpeted with the broad, glossy leaves of the plantain laid side by side, their midribs having been removed. I might have guessed the purpose of this sylvan temple, had not my guide, Don Hermengildo, made it known to me. It was the improvised village ballroom, where I was soon to see a Mexican *fandango* in all its varied phases.

In most other countries dancing waits for the night, and is carried on under the light of oil lamps or jets of gas. In the *tierra caliente* of Mexico the sun often shines on the worshippers of Terpsichore, who, in their devotion to the goddess, are ardent as his beams. At the *fiesta* of Cacahuatl the dancing commenced in the early afternoon, and was soon at its height. Three or four guitars of the *bandolon* and *jaranca* kind composed the orchestra, their music occasionally supplemented by the voices of the players, with words frequently improvised, and not unfrequently expressing sentiments that in polite society might have been deemed rather *bizarre*.

As soon as the music had struck up, groups of young girls were trooping towards the arboreal ballroom, each

house in the village contributing its quota. Among them I saw Ña Rafaela and her sister, both conspicuous by their beauty, though in this respect there were many others remarkable.

TERPSICHORE AMONG THE JAROCHOS.

The dancing commenced, and was carried on with the ardour and zest peculiar to country-people, especially of Spanish race. Several kinds of dances were executed recognisable as those common to old Spain, among them the *bolero* and *zapateador*. There was also a *contradanza*, a sort of quadrille with several couples; after which a comical fellow gave the dance styled *La Garotta*, in which he imitated the twisting contortions of a malefactor suffering the Spanish mode of capital punishment. The exhibition, to me somewhat disgusting, drew from the Jarochos loud *vivas* and screams of delight.

To this succeeded the *pretenera*, a dance somewhat similar, but to a different *son*, or tune. These the musicians changed, either of their own accord, or by the command of the spectators.

When tired of the *pretenera*, there was a murmur among the crowd as if denoting expectation. Something especially attractive was evidently looked for. Then came the cry, "*Chamarra y macheté!*" (sash and sword). Though I had heard of this dance, I had never before witnessed it. I therefore watched with all eyes for the event.

The *estrada*, or raised floor, had been for the moment unoccupied, as the stage of a theatre between two pieces. And just as the *première danseuse* comes on, amid the universal applause of pit, boxes, and gallery, so was a

young girl saluted by the encircling crowd of Jarochos. It was Na Rafaela.

Don Hermengildo, standing by my side—so close that I could feel the beatings of his heart—seemed the only one in the assemblage that did not applaud. His admiration was too strong, too passionate, to admit of any idle exhibition.

Beyond all question the girl looked lovely—I might say, superbly so. The excitement of the occasion had called the carmine into her cheeks, till it vied with the crimson flowers of the grenadine wreathed coquettishly around her head; while in her jet-black eyes burned a wild voluptuous fire. It seemed to flame up as proudly and coquettishly she glanced at the spectators. She evidently felt her power—the gift of great beauty—that among the gallant and passionate Jarochos made her the peer of a queen.

Up to this time, and during all the day, I had been looking for Joaquin Valdez, the guide who was to accompany me on my projected journey. Don Hermengildo's assurance or intimation that he would be at the *fiesta* seemed doubtful of fulfilment, and I began to think I should have to return to Santa Fé and make fresh search for him. But just as the guitar-players commenced striking up the *son* for the dance of the "sash and sword," another sound caused distraction from the spectacle, at the same time creating a movement among the spectators.

It was the tramping of a horse—a horse coming at quick gallop into the village. In another moment a horseman appeared in the plaza. Reining up, he dismounted, and advanced towards the dancing place.

The Jarochos made way, several crying out, "*Viva Valdez!*" I did not need hearing the name to recognise in

the new comer the man who was to have guided me all over Mexico.

Passing through the outer circle he took stand close to the dancing-stage, just opposite to where I was myself placed beside Don Hermengildo.

A look at my late host's rival, coupled with a glance I saw given him by Ña Rafaela, convinced me that the amber beads had been bestowed in vain. In comparing the two men, and taking personal appearance for the standard, the advantages were all on the side of Valdez, and I knew that this would outweigh everything else in the estimation of a Jarocha. In her eyes intellect, morality, sobriety, even honesty, are as nothing compared with personal beauty, where courage is conjoined.

"CHAMARRA Y MACHETÉ."

As soon as the guitar-players had got fairly into the tune, the young girl began the measure of the dance. It went at first with a slow tranquil step, the music having in it something of melancholy. Gradually it became livelier and quicker. The eyes of Ña Rafaela, hitherto bent upon the floor, were raised, and wandered around the circle of spectators in a glance half coquettish, half inquiring. It seemed to ask, "Who is to be my partner?"

At least half a score of young fellows, thus interpreting it, sprang out upon the *estrada;* but Don Hermengildo, watching the chance, had been foremost. A slight inclination of Ña Rafaela's head told him he was accepted. Perhaps the amber beads did something to obtain for him the preference.

Having got the floor thus conceded, he placed himself

vis-à-vis with the girl, when a dance succeeded, in movements bearing some resemblance to those of the opposite lady and gentleman in the figure of a quadrille. It was, however, much more expressive, representing the different phases of courtship and coquetry, with a passionate *abandon* that would scarcely have been tolerated in a fashionable ballroom.

It ended in Don Hermengildo unwinding the China crape sash from his waist, and flinging it over the shoulders of the fair *danseuse;* then, gracefully bending and bowing, he retired back into the circle of spectators.

She permitting the scarf to remain there, signified her acceptance of him until some other should show a better claim to her preference. The affair was, in fact, neither more nor less than a challenge, and I expected to see Joaquin Valdez next take the floor. In this I was disappointed: another young fellow claiming precedence, which was by common assent accorded to him. The girl was still dancing on, the music having continued without interruption.

The new partner went through a series of jigs and pirouettes somewhat similar to those executed by Don Hermengildo, and terminating in a similar manner, with the exception that, instead of presenting his scarf to the lady, the second partner offered her his *sombrero*, with its garniture of gold bullion.

This she accepted, placing it coquettishly upon her head, and so slanted that her magnificent *chevelure* of sable hue appeared advantageously beneath the bordering of gold.

For an instant she paused in *pirouette*, while adjusting the hat, and then continued dancing as before.

The act, gracefully done, drew a chorus of "*vivas*" and "*bravos*" from the spectators; and now all was silence around the circle, the musicians alone keeping up the noise, and even increasing it by a more vigorous twanging of guitar-strings. These fellows appeared to improvise the music, suiting the strains to the dances. Experience told them that the occasion had now arrived calling for notes of a warlike nature, and their instruments responded in tone.

Among the crowd arose the cry, "*Macheté! macheté!*" I knew what it meant, and was not surprised when I saw Valdez spring up to the *estrada*, and with a graceful bow present himself to the *danseuse*. She was still moving to the music, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt her Terpsichorean enjoyment, and only returned his salutation by a slight nod, which, however, told him that he too was welcome to the honour of bestowing his favours.

A new *pas de deux* commenced, which was carried on as before, though with voluntary variations; in fact, many of the figures appeared to be extemporised, and although not a word was spoken, the dancers seemed to converse in a language perfectly comprehended by those standing around. Every now and then bravos resounded on the air.

It ended in Valdez drawing his *macheté* from its sheath; and with a blue ribbon which was knotted round its hilt suspending it from the right shoulder of the girl, her left already carrying the scarf of Don Hermengildo.

The dance was at an end. Ña Rafaela, ceasing her saltations, stood in the centre of the *estrada*, palpitating, proud. Loud *vivas* rang through the palm-thatched

Like one standing in the lobby of a theatre, I watched for the next incident on the stage.

It came in due course. Don Hermengildo, leaving my side, stepped out and redeemed his scarf by pouring a handful of silver coins into the palm of Ña Rafaela, who received the *douceur* with drooping eyelids and lips quite motionless. Thanks were not needed; it was simply the redeeming of a pledge.

The young fellow who had pawned his hat, took back his property with a less profuse expenditure; while Valdez, on regaining his sword, gave only a smile. The girl smiled as he took the weapon from her hand. The spectators saw it, and said, "Don Hermengildo has no chance; Valdez is her man. There must be a fight for it."

They said this gleefully, anticipating a sport better than bull-taming, cock-fighting, or even an *albur* at monté.

A JAROCHO DUEL.

Nothing could have been more clear than what was to succeed—a combat between the two men—perhaps a duel to the death.

At all events, there would be a drawing of blood. The Jarochos awaited it as a matter of course—a thing of ordinary occurrence at the *fiesta* and *fandango*.

The dancing was for a time suspended, the girls scattering off to the houses, leaving the men in possession of the palm-screened pavilion. So late the scene of gaiety and pleasance, it was now to be the arena of a contest that would surely end in bloodshed.

I saw that nothing could stay the encounter. It was in the heart of Jarocho-land, and its customs and habits were

law. The *alcaldé* of the village, with his *alguazils*, was present, but they could not have prevented the strife. Even the *cura* did not interfere. It would have served no purpose, for the fight would have come off all the same, beyond his jurisdiction, in the forest shade—sunshine—anywhere. It was a difficulty not to be adjusted without the letting of blood.

It was not my business to interfere in it; and, thus reflecting, I became a silent spectator of a combat strange as it was serious.

For a duel it was one of the shortest it has been my ill luck to assist at. It did not occupy ten minutes of time. In even less the whole thing was over, quicker than could have been any affair with pistols.

The antagonists took their stand, each with his *macheté* drawn, their left arms enrolled in their *mangas* by way of shield. Their fencing was far from dexterous. It was evident that neither had ever taken lessons from a *maître d'escrime.* On both sides it was simply a succession of rash thrusts and clumsy parrying, which ended, as might be expected, in the mutual drawing of blood, with a considerable hacking of flesh. So successful were they in this that both combatants came to the ground, and were carried off by their respective *amigos.*

To myself the result was so far disastrous that I had to leave Cacahuatl alone, and seek a new companion for my ZIGZAG JOURNEY THROUGH MEXICO.

It was several months after when this journey was completed, and I returned to the land of the Jarocho. I then learnt that both combatants had recovered from their wounds, and were still competitors for the hand of Ña Rafaela.

During an interview I had with this fair damsel, curiosity tempted me to ask which was to be the favoured one.

She answered me with a significant smile and a coquettish toss of the head, that burst her coiled hair, and sent the jetty plaits scattering over her shoulders :

"*Ni uno ni otro!*"

THE END.

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